STUDIES IN INDIAN ART

V. S. AGRAWALA

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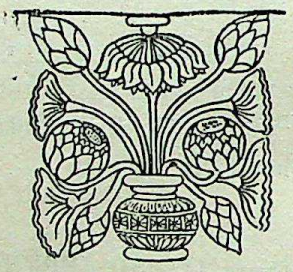

INTRODUCTION

The book *Studies in Indian Art* is a collection of my papers on the subject of Indian art contributed to various Journals. They cover a wide range of subjects as sculpture, architecture, painting, arts and aesthetics. Indian art has a long history and is a subject of great importance as expressing the soul of Indian civilisation. Its value is equal to that of Indian religion, philosophy and literature, which are all to be tapped as perennial sources for the understanding of Indian art-forms.

Indian art is to be studied at two different levels, viz. the external form and the inner meaning. Up to now it has been usual to approach Indian art from the external point of view, i.e. the objective description of images, statuary, architectural buildings and monuments. That is quite correct and essential as the primary basis of approach. But there is also the other side of the medal, viz. the esoteric side which consists in the study of meaning and purpose of art of which the roots lie hidden in Indian religion and philosophy. By looking at these two with equal insight one maybe able to recover the true and full significance of the Indian mind as expressed in the creations of art.

In the essays assembled here we have given equal emphasis both on the external form and the inner meaning. Indian art consists of many great Schools of local and national character through which the soul of India found its adequate expression, which has been recorded in the religious and classical literature of the country. As such art is vested in a wide terminology found in literature and *Śilpa* texts. We believe in extracting this material with as much care as possible. This is a new approach about which much more needs to be done. This will reveal the truth of Indian art in a more intimate manner.

Indian artists were, no doubt, interested in beautiful forms and aesthetic problems. They handled a vast and varied repertoire of geometrical, floral, arborial, animal and human forms but their greatest interest or appeal was to the divine figures, a rich pantheon of gods and goddesses who filled the centre of the picture and whose endless glory and great splendour was of real interest to human beings. Nothing affords greater pleasure to the Indian art critic than to feel divine presence of great gods like Rudra-Śiva, and Vishṇu, of goddesses like Śrī-Lakshmī and Pārvatī or such divine personages as Buddha and Tīrthaṅkara. This calls for a new approach both in the art connoisseur or the sculptor or painter. The papers collected here just make the first attempt to invoke this point of view.

In the essays like 'The Alphabet of Indian Art Symbolism', 'Lalita-Kalā' we have handled the subject with the point of view in which the vista of interest is much extended and various strands of art, religion and philosophy are put together to deepen the springs of aesthetic joy, so far as Indian art is concerned.

Indian art is full of hundreds of topics of an auspicious or symbolic character. The paper on *Pūrṇaghaṭa* is one instance of it. The *Harivaṁśa* gives a list of 108 auspicious signs (*Aṣhṭottaraśata māṅgalika chihna*) and a standing call comes to the investigator to explore the field much further. Śrī-Lakshmī is another fascinating subject. There has been extensive mingling of forms in making of divine and art forms. Śrī-Lakshmī, Pūrṇaghaṭa, Padmavana, Diggaja, these several elements became mingled in evolving art-form of a very charming character. The *Kalpavṛiksha* or the wish-fulfilling tree of heaven has a similar appeal and presents a long evolution controlling the decoration of the great Stūpas and railings. The Pūrṇaghaṭa was known as Pūrṇakumbha, Indrakumbha, Somakalaśa, Chandana-Kalaśa, Pūrṇa Vīrakāṁsya, (Droṇa-Parva II, 29), Bhadraghaṭa, Maṅgalaghaṭa. It was a well known auspicious symbol from the time of the *Ṛigveda* where a girl bearing auspicious pitcher was known as *Udakakumbhinī* (RV. I. 191. 14) same as the *Pūrṇakumbhanārī* of the *Atharvaveda*. In religious processions in a standard team of eight auspicious maidens there was one called *Pūrṇakumbhakanyā* mentioned in the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa* (Sundara Kāṇḍa) and the *Lalitavistara* (VII. p. 71).

In the paper on the Great Stūpa of Bharhut an explanation is offered for the first time of the auspicious motifs of the land of Uttarakuru and of what gushing reception they received in the decoration of such great Stūpas as at Bharhut, Sanchi, Amaravati. This discovery bestows a new interest on the study of the making of these monuments. Certainly their embellishment was organised on the basis of folk-beliefs of long standing.

In the paper on the Pre-Kushāṇa Art of Mathura the material about the Yaksha in early Indian art and specially at Mathura was brought together for the first time and has its value even today.

The Mathūra school of sculpture has been my special field and a bunch of 15 papers appertains to the various aspects of the Mathura school. The section of Gupta Art is a class by itself. This was the epoch of Indian aesthetic endeavour and the few articles given here are only by way of a path-finding. The subject is very vast and attractive. The Śiva liṅgam from Nachna Kuthara is a perfect example of the beautiful creation of the Gupta School. The artist appears to have almost illustrated the description of Yogīśvara Śiva of the *Kumārasambhava* of Kālidāsa. [3.44—51.]

I am deeply obliged to Sri Shiv Kumar for the illustrations and organising the book and Sri Prithvi Kumar for seeing it through the press. Both have worked in the planning of the publication.

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I

AN APPROACH

1. ALPHABET OF INDIAN ART SYMBOLISM

Indian art representing life through the ages speaks an eloquent language of vast and varied symbolism. Art in India is not factual record of life in various forms, but from the outset it was intended to become a vehicle of the forms of thought, which enriched culture, religion, philosophy and literature. In India art has been employed to convey through its symbolical language—the ideas of the mind. Human speech has a limited appeal, but the language of art presents a universal approach to ideas. It was an open book for all, speaking a language which was the outcome of spiritual experience of ideas, or in other words, of religion. The feeling of art was dictated by man's devotional approach to such experience. This was the higher purpose of art ; higher only in the sense that its theme was of a sublime world, not that art was in any way the preserve of the select few only, and inaccessible to the masses of people, or deliberately kept back from them.

It was realised that art had a mission and a purpose which must be expressed through forms, whose appeal was irresistible and meaning unmistakable. Such language was devised in the form of symbols which played such an important part in Indian art. The symbols sometimes occupy the centre of the picture in the form of the images of divine beings, saints and seers who themselves typify certain great ideas accepted as truth through ages by a devout humanity. The symbols also served the purpose of decoration, adornment and space-filling. Even here, they have their values and are linked to a predominant common purpose, namely, expression of ideas through an aesthetic medium, with a charm that enhances their appeal and in a manner that contributes to the enrichment of the outer forms of life in relation to the inner growth of the mind.

In the Vedic period forms of thought and of art were taking shape. It was the period of land settlement. Vast unmapped horizons stretched before man's vision, and the mind was grappling in all its fresh vigour and joy to understand nature, and to evolve an alphabet adequate for expressing that experience in tangible word and form. Such is the nature of Vedic art conception. Everywhere it is a new world of symbols. Forms of deities are in the making. Ideas surge, are understood, analysed, clarified, and robed in tangible imagery, half revealed and half concealed. As the Vedic seer put it: "The daughters of Heaven are neither fully nude nor fully robed." Similar is the case with the symbols of Vedic thought. Sometimes there are distinct indications of meanings firmly grasped ; at others there is something which eludes from expression ; at others there are only dim intimations of thought and part glimpses of reality.

The gods and goddesses flit across like the sons and daughters of Heaven and Earth, those Eternal Parents. Spirits presiding over forests and trees, brooks and ponds,

spring up into existence as symbols of ideas in the animistic consciousness and the earth-bound feeling of the primitive settlers of the soil. These deities crystalised as time elapsed and as later influences and ramifications of thought were captured and cast into forms as gods and goddesses of the Brahmanical pantheon. A figure of Vishṇu in the Vedic period is only a thought form, a conglomerate of several ideas not yet cast distinctly. The idea was of the whole world, not yet pinned to a particular form. We find it as a mirror of the myth of the solar god at one place; at another of the human soul passing through birth and death in relation to the physical form in which it is embodied. The germs of the legend of Vishṇu assuming a dwarfish form (*Vāmana*) and later on cosmic one (*Virāṭ*) are present in the Ṛigveda. We find in it an honest attempt to give expression to an idea of how the macrocosm (*Brahmāṇḍa*) and the microcosm (*Piṇḍa*) are related to each other, the one reflecting the working of its counter-part, and the two being essentially similar in their nature and purpose. It is like the point expanding into its circumference, or the child growing into the stature of its parent, or the human mind outgrowing its petty limitations evolving into the cosmic consciousness, or the seed developing into a mighty tree. The pattern of Vāmana and Vishṇu is symbol of thought and suits all the above phenomena, being the motif *par excellence* of the relationship of the microcosm and macrocosm found in nature.

The *Devas* and the *Asuras* engaged in an eternal conflict represent another symbol of Vedic thought. As Dr. Coomaraswamy interpreted it: "The Angles and the Titans represent the heavenly powers of light and the subterranean forces of darkness." They are also spoken of as denizens of a non-human world, e.g. Garuḍas representing solar light of the ethereal regions, and Nāgas the crawling forces of the dark under-world.

All religions and arts flourishing on the Indian soil have accepted these motifs as vehicle of valuable religious ideas. Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism together with their sects of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, Digambara and Śvetāmbara, Śaiva and Vaishṇava, as well as hundreds of subsidiary cults—all pay homage to these motifs without which none of them would be able to exist. Such mythology was the life-breath of these religious systems, which vitalised and inspired them and explained adequately all that they wanted to convey, of the moral and the spiritual worlds. Myths are indispensable to religion and life. Without myths and legends, Indian art and literature would hardly be able to stand. It is necessary that myths should be properly understood. They should be approached from the point of view of those for whom they were meant. For the critique of pure reason, myths are like meaningless chaff, but from the scientific point of view, where science represents an attempt to understand human thought in that proper environment of time and space wh the myths were cast, myths and legends have great value and represent in a real manne the language that gives access to the creative activity and minds of men in the sphere of art, religion and literature.

Myths originate in the hearts of men, that fertile soil which receives, assimilates and recreates all the diverse reactions and influences. Myths are more real in moulding the lives of men than other worldly things. So far as Indian religions are concerned, no factual accounts of the lives of particular prophets and saints were tolerated until they had been transformed into myths, this transformations being in accordance with certain laws on a cosmic model.

Buddha, for example, is born as the son of Māyādevī, not as nature would have it, but through the right side of the womb of his mother. As a new-born babe, it would not cry, but walk the Seven Steps, and be washed not with ordinary water, but with two miraculous streams issuing from the ground under the influence of the two Nāga kings, Nanda and Upananda. The two streams of hot and cold water conform to the two world forces of peace and activity, rest and motion, *Soma* and *Agni* in Vedic language. At every stage in the life of the Enlightened One, the myths impart to it its devout religious character. If we wish to understand the religious life of the Buddha, and not merely Gautama the Man, the myths and legends hold the key. Their meanings alone reveal to us the rich treasures of Buddhistic thought as symbolised in the life of the Master.

The ancient myth of the conflict between the gods and the demons assumes new forms in the life of the Buddha. The victory over Māra, the Genius of Evil, is only the new commentary of an old motif. Unless we have understood the spiritual significance of the *Daivāsuram* and the related mysteries of Yogic *samādhi* and contemplation, the victory of the Enlightened One over the forces of passion and darkness does not reveal its true secret to our understanding. We miss its true significance in the making of the Buddha, who had become awakened or obtained perfect enlightenment, for whom the coveted portals of wisdom had been flung open, and who marching as a spiritual pilgrim from stage to stage had attained the end of journey and a triumph which could not be shaken by any later upheavals. The Buddha of real value for the Buddhists was not the prince walking the streets of Kapilavastu in flesh and blood, but the Buddha who had attained his spiritual rebirth in an ideal world. The Supramundanist thinkers of Buddhism (*Lokottaravādins*) perfected this conception of the Buddha slowly working in accordance with the accepted traditional motifs.

The picture is equally true for the Jainas and the Hindus. Mahāvīra represented in his victory over the serpent symbolising death, and Kṛishṇa defeating the all-consuming poisonous fumes of a deadly serpent and dancing over its hoods and wresting from its clutches the Lotuses—these are motifs in the same tradition symbolising a common pattern of thought. A systematic study of these mythical and legendary lives of the founders of religions reveals the axis of their spiritual make-up. There would be many details which are merely excrescences, but one can not miss the grain in the chaff.

The supreme problem of Indian art, which in all stages was linked with religion, therefore relates to the right interpretation of symbols. The myths could not be represented except through symbols e.g. the cosmic *Aśvattha*, or World-Tree, the Ash Tree of Existence, the Yggdrasil of Nordic mythology, whose root is up in heaven and whose branches are spread down below, which lives through past, present and future; or the *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* and the *Kalpalatā*, the Wish-fulfilling Tree and Wish-fulfilling Creeper, which are but the symbols of the mind, under which each individual takes his seat and rushes through life; or the *Pūrṇa Ghaṭa*, the Full Vase, which is verily the human body which contains everything and which overflows with plenty so long as there are waters of life in it; or the *Kāmadhenu*, the Wish-fulfilling Cow of plenty symbolising word or Speech; or *Samudra*, the Milky Ocean of human aspirations, the deep Sea of all potentialities, which the Devas and the Asuras tried with combined effort to churn and produce the Fourteen Jewels of idealised possessions that human beings desire, most coveted of them all being *Amṛita*, the Immortal Drink, which bestows eternal life and youth on mortal beings; or *Svastika*, a dynamic pattern whose four arms rotate round a focal point and generate the life-force; or *Chakra*, the Wheel which represents Time, the one-wheeled chariot of the sun, and also all the attributes of things, the various Dharmas that distinguish all created things; or the *Aṣṭa-māṅgalika-chihna*, the Eight Auspicious Signs; or the *Chaturdaśa Svapna*, the Fourteen Lucky Dreams, each constituting an image of thought to symbolise some phenomenon either of the cosmos or of the individual's life. These with many more constitute alphabet of Indian symbolism representing religious ideas through art. With the march of civilisation when the contents of both life and mind become more elaborate in succeeding generations, the symbols also multiplied and sometimes changed their form. New themes were attempted by the side of old ones; e.g. the number of Mother Goddesses together with their forms and names was an ever evolving conception. The sports of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa were perfected as the arche-type of love symbolism in all its nuances, imbued with hot passion and the fire of the Indian wind and the Indian sky, but always true to its spiritual background and being vitalised by it. Rādhā as the human soul passes through all experiences in her quest for union with the Divine Purusha symbolised by Kṛishṇa. As Dr. Coomaraswamy interprets it: "In the Vaishṇava devotional approach and its poetry human love is conceived as the means and symbol of all union. Lovers represented are always Rādhā and Kṛishṇa, typifying the eternal motif of Man and Woman and revealing in every day events their heavenly image. The whole land of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa is the land of our own experience where Beauty and Love are sublimated and transformed into the purest divine experience of the heart of the human soul". (*Rajput Painting*). In the words of Grierson: "The young Kṛishṇa represented to the Vaishṇavas the Supreme Deity, the Creator, from whom all Creation was but a sportive emanation, and full of love, passing the love of a father, to his devotees. Rādhā on the other hand

was the human soul, led by religion to offer not *of* her own, but her own, whole-self to God. That religion taught just as our Christian doctors teach, the necessity of our entire self-surrender to God which it adorned, and so, too, imaged that devotion by human love. But the Christians chose filial love as the model of the soul's devotion, and parental love as that of the Creator's for his creatures. India took a different interpretation. The soul's devotion to the deity is pictured by Rādhā's self-abandonment to her beloved Kṛishṇa and all the hot blood of oriental passion is encouraged to pour forth one mighty flood of praise and prayer to the Infinite Creator, who waits with loving outstretched arms to receive the worshipper into his bosom and to convey him safely to an eternal rest across the seemingly shoreless Ocean of Existence. This passion is that of a child of nature.... I am persuaded that no indecent thought entered their minds when they wrote these burning words." (*Introduction to the Satsaiya of Bihari*, 1896, p. 8). As language of symbolism Rādhā and Kṛishṇa almost occupy the entire field of the medieval Indian religious poetry and the pictorial arts of the Rajasthani and Pahari schools. Art, religion and symbolism are all inter-related. The one serves the needs of the other, justifying its own purpose by imparting richness to life and fostering creative activity in different fields. A true history of Indian art is rooted in a sympathetic approach to the language of its symbolism. Indian art was conceived not to serve an intellectual purpose but to fulfil a spiritual urge and to meet the religious needs of the people in a very real sense.

Religion provided food for the soul. It opend the gates of human heart for a tide-like flow of human emotions. Religion also provided zest to life and gave to it its most valuable motive-forces. Inspired by Religion, art retained its purity. It was utilitarian from the worldly point of view, but was worshipped for its own sake, i.e. for the sake of a higher spiritual purpose. Its function was not to please the eye, but to satisfy the spirit. There was no compromise on this vital point. Although portraits also received some attention in the Hindu paintings of Rajasthan and Kangra, but portraiture was a very small part of the total creative activity of these schools. They gain their excellence not as perfect portraits, but as figures in which the factual treatment of the human body is the least part. It is the emphasis on the symbolic character of the scene which gives to the paintings their true value. Indian art, except for the brief interlude of Mughal art, did not interest itself in protraiture. In the words of the *Śukranīti*, portrait painting is unheavenly (*asvargiya*). At another time, *viz.* in the Gandhara school of the North-West, the artists were working with consciousness of the human element in art, the figures being conceived as true to human anatomy rather than as the idealised products of the mind. It was the fatal weakness of Gandhara art that it conceived the Buddha in terms of the human body rather than in terms of the ideal *Yogī*. The more it succeeds in its anatomical representation, the poorer it becomes on the spiritual side. No human figure, as it is, carries with it any attention unless it undergoes a spiritual transformation. To the extent that the image seeks direct representation, it becomes weakened in its symbolism.

Indian art does not seek to create men and women true to life, but types true to the mind. They are like alphabets to convey ideas which can be handled as distinctly as ordinary letters. The *Yakshas* and *Yakshīs*, the *Nāgas and Nāgīs*, and a host of other Water and Tree Spirits representing the symbols of fertility, have been handled by the Indian artists with amazing mastery and clarity as vehicles of cult ideas, which no human language could possibly have conveyed with such effectiveness and charm. Their language is elevated to the rank of a universal code which becomes intelligible with least possible effort. Thus Indian art with its extensive *repertoire* of decorative and iconographic motifs constitutes a virtual dictionary of India's religious thought in its varied systems conceived with extraordinary richness and beauty. The Indian soul rejoices at the sight of symbols in art, and clings to them also in religion and poetry. The pleasure of looking at a purely factual subject is limited and of short duration, where as the symbols grow in meaning according to the capacity of the mind and heart of the devoted on-looker.

The problem of symbols should be approached with sympathy and understanding. Each symbol should be studied in its proper perspective in relation to the earlier motifs of thought and those which followed it. Chronological solutions based on art-objects being assigned to their proper sequence in time are good in so far as they go, but that is not all. We should co-relate art-forms to the ideas of which art was an expression in each period. The language of art-symbols throws light on the history of thought—a very important purpose of art studies, provided the work is undertaken in a strictly scientific manner keeping as close to objective facts as we do for chronological problems. It will then be found that religion and philosophy provide a commentary not only to the increased understanding of art-history, but of its genesis and purpose.

2. LALITA KALĀ

Whatever be the heights of metaphysical and moral thought attained by a people, the measure of their greatness is more truly reflected in those formal elements of culture which are comprehended in the term art. Art is primarily concerned with the cultivation of beauty through the physical medium. The physical object of art is only a symbol that evokes an experience, as it were, of an aesthetic shock, and thereby it connects us with the vast substratum of pleasure which in Indian aesthetics is called *Rasa*. The material world when properly transformed into terms of the beautiful leads to an experience of *Rasa*. An uncarved stone is only a rough primitive block, but it conceals within itself the potentiality of peerless beauty. The artist only makes that beauty manifest at a particular point and transforms the rough unhewn piece into a symbol that radiates joy and beauty. Man's worship of art consists in the creation around himself of numberless symbols and expressions of this kind which purport to manifest one or more aspects of the great storehouse of beauty that is in nature.

Pericles warned the citizens of Athens when its sense-bound art was at its height in these words: "We support art but with a certain restraint and we support science without becoming unmanly." In the golden age of Indian art, that is the Gupta period when Indian art had outgrown its craft traditions and really became fine art—'*Lalita Kalā*' as the poet called it—Kālidāsa gave utterance to a similar ideal of Indian aesthetics: "*Na Rūpam Pāpavṛittaye*". "Beauty ofcourse is our ideal, but not sin." It is true that men and women in the Gupta Age cultivated beauty as a religious cult. Both in the Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa and in the Bṛihatsaṃhitā of Varāhamihira we find mention of *Rūpasattra*, i.e. Beauty-culture, and the reference certainly relates to the popular passion for beautiful form in the Gupta Age. As Kālidāsa puts it: "O Pārvatī, the common belief that beauty is not for sin, seems to be unexceptionable" (Kumāra-Sambhava, V. 36). This was the ideal followed in the domain of art and life. The Māra-conquering Buddha represents the spiritual truth of the Gupta Age, and the vitality of its culture derives its force from the ideal of the Higher Wisdom (*Anuttara Jñāna*) to which reference is found in many inscriptions on the pedestals of Buddha images.

Indian art presents a long panorama, extending from the Ṛigvedic period to the close of the 18th century. As observed by Giedion in his *Space Time and Architecture*: "History is not a compilation of facts but an insight into a moving process of life." A true and close-up study of Indian art must lead to an insight into the moving process of life that unfolded itself under the Indian sky during the successive ages. Art has preserved in visual documentation the discoveries of thought and the impact of mind on

the world around as manifested during the long course of our history. The Vedic period, initiating the great march of Indian culture on its onward path, is truly the period of 'land taking'. Not only in a physical sense when this nation got settled on the land, but in the region of thought also it was an age of Path-finders, the Pathikṛit Ṛishis, who chartered unknown domains of the mind and created eternal motifs of thought that formulate and explain the cosmic processes as applicable equally to the life of the individual and the much bigger entity of the world. A clear inventory of the Vedic motifs remains a desideratum and the work should be carried out comprehensively from the viewpoint of art history. Dr. Coomaraswamy offered brilliant expositions of some of these great symbols of thought and life, which also were virtually the symbols of art.

The study of symbols is not only fascinating, but also essential for a clear appraisal of the significance of Indian art motifs. The *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* (Full Vase), *Kalpavṛiksha* (Wish Fulfilling Tree), *Kāmadhenu* (Cow of Plenty), *Svastika*, *Chakra*, Sūrya, Nāga-Garuḍa and the *Daivāsuram* are some of the great motifs that have been clearly formulated in the Vedas, and throughout our art history they serve as the vehicles of thought and of decoration. They constitute the basic vocabulary of Indian art and literature.

The *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* or Full Vase is pre-eminently a Vedic motif. It is referred to as the over-flowing Full Vase (*Pūrṇo asyā Kalaśaḥ*) and as filled with all the pair of opposites that constitute life in its dual aspect of Being and Becoming (*Sat-Asat*), Masculine and Feminine (*Stri-Purān*), Childhood and Age, Immortality and Death and all the virtues that the gods have created and all the vices that Asuras love. In vedic thought the human body itself is such a Full Vase (*Pūrṇa-Kalaśaḥ*), and there is no other more charming symbol created in nature than the human body. As saith an Upanishadic passage: "Of all the forms that were created the human form was the most perfect" (*Purusho vāva bata sukritaḥ*). This *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* appears as a symbol of Indian art in a great variety of forms (*Fig. 1a, 1b, 1c & 1d*).

The *Kalpā-Vṛiksha* or the Wish-Fulfilling Tree is another charming symbol. As a tree or a creeper it sometimes originates from the navel or mouth of a Yaksha, or grows naturally and then sends its endless offshoots into scrolls or arabesques of intricate design. According to the Vedic thought, the human mind—Kalpa—is the source from which all thoughts, either disciplined or uncontrolled (*Saṃkalpa-Vikalpa*) emanate. Mind is the virtual Thought Tree, the *Kalpa-Vṛiksha*, under which each one of us stands according to nature's life-scheme. The intricate foliage of this tree or creeper comprises our endless desires and passions that envelope our lives (*Fig. 4: a, b, c & d*).

Of the great Vedic motifs, the one relating to the eternal conflict of good and evil known as the *Daivāsuram*, constitutes the most forceful and varied symbol for the flow of religious thought and the manifestation of art forms. All our gods and goddesses that

Fig. 1. (a) Sarnath

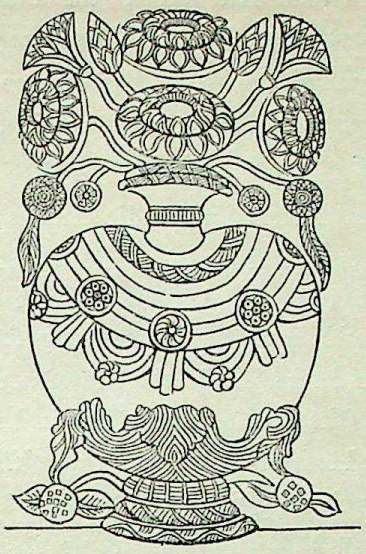


Fig. 1. (c) Amaravati

Fig. 1. (b) Mathura

Fig. 2. (a) Śrī-Lakshamī (Front view)

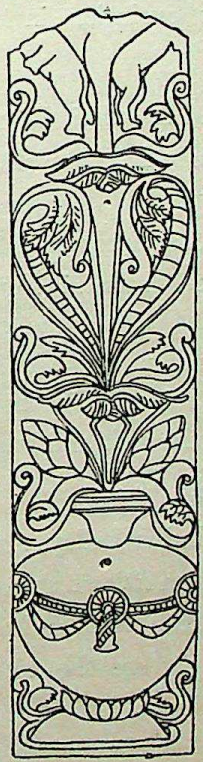


Fig. 1. (d) Pūrṇa-ghaṭa Anurādhapur

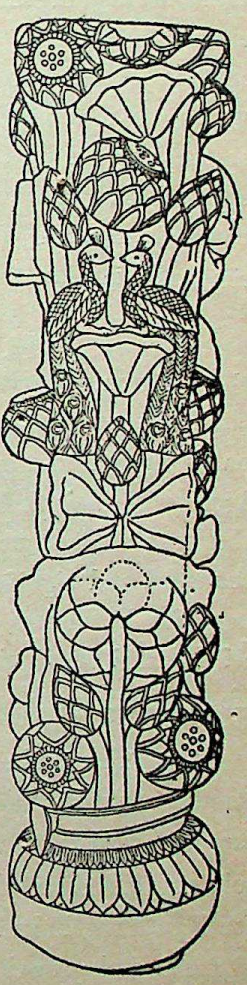


Fig. 2. (b) (back View)

enter into deadly combats with demoniac forces, the Buddha that vanquishes Māra the genius of evil, the Yogī Śiva that triumphs over Kāma the god of love, are all but standing commentaries to explain the dominant motif of *Daivāsuram*. Originally formulated in the Ṛigveda, it subsequently underwent endless transformation, but remained throughout the outstanding metaphysical motif of Indian religious thought and art expressing it.

There is an immense richness of Vedic motifs; a full study of them with subsequent history would be regarded as a capital contribution to the exposition of Indian literature and art. Actual art remains of the Vedic period are still unknown. It seems unlikely that they would ever be forthcoming for the Vedic thought revelled in *Deva-śilpa*, the divine or cosmic forms. Like the life of a child waiting to manifest itself in specialized formal elements, the whole cosmic life is beautiful to the Vedic seer. He finds beauty in the golden goddess of dawn with a golden mien, moving in her golden chariot across the sky and sprinkling immortality with her golden fingered hands. The aesthetic reaction of the Vedic poet is available to us in a number of beauty denoting words, as if appearing just fresh from the mould. They are reminiscent of the Vedic aesthetics, and we are indebted to Dr. Oldenberg for a very illuminating study of those expressions. However, the thesis could be much further extended and each word or motif could be studied with respect to its evolution in classical Sanskrit literature up to the time of Kālidāsa and Bāṇabhaṭṭa.

The two goddesses *Śrī* and *Lakshmī*, Beauty and Prosperity, are spoken of as the twin mistresses of the soul (*Śrīścha Lakshmīścha Patnyau*), the two benign influences that nurture an individual in his domestic and social setting. This conception was later on developed as the goddess *Padma-Śrī* in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, or the figurine of *Gaja-Lakshmī* (*Fig. 8*) and *Śrī-Lakshmī* (*Fig. 2 a & 2 b*) which begin to appear in the art of Bharhut, Sanchi, the Orissa Caves and elsewhere, and survive throughout as beautiful and significant motifs of Indian art. As a motif it received universal homage from the Buddhists, the Hindus and Jains. Like many other Tree and Water motifs the *Śrī-Lakshmī* conception was rooted in the soil, and is a product of the earthbound sense of life permeating the early Indian art (Fig. *ib.*).

The main problem of the Indus Valley art is an investigation of its historical connections with the ancient art of Western Asia on the one hand and its subsequent links with the historical art of India herself. The Mother-Goddess and the Yogī-Śiva offer clear pointers to Indian affinities, and similarly are the decorative motifs, the geometrical and floral patterns linked to historical survivals, and it seems highly improbable that an art of such vital growth which flourished on the Indian soil from the Sutlej to the Arabian Sea for a thousand years should have vanished without leaving a trail for its successors. Of its survivals we have as yet only dim intimations, but the subject does not seem to have

Round parasol on the head of a free standing colossal Bodhisattva image. Mathura, 1st Century A. D. Now in Sarnath Museum.

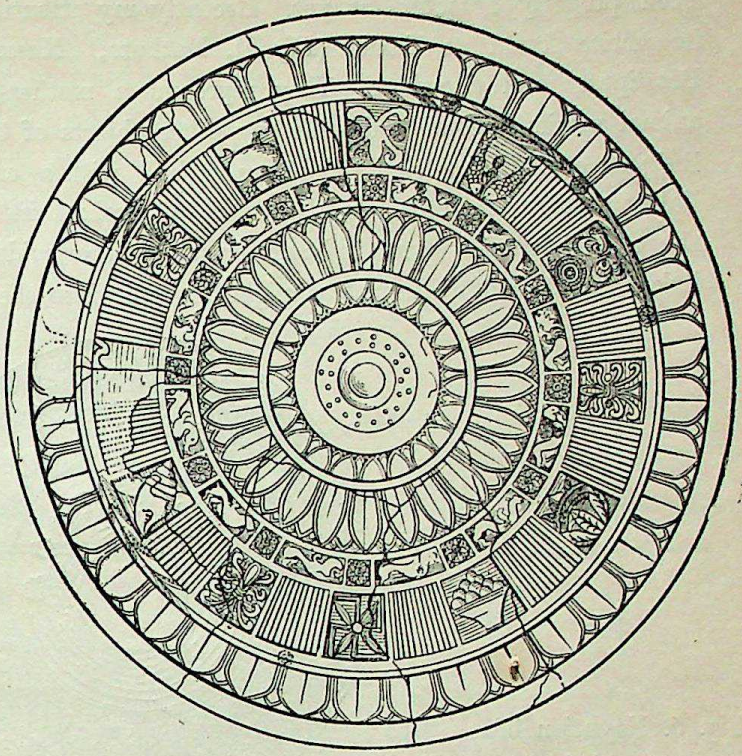
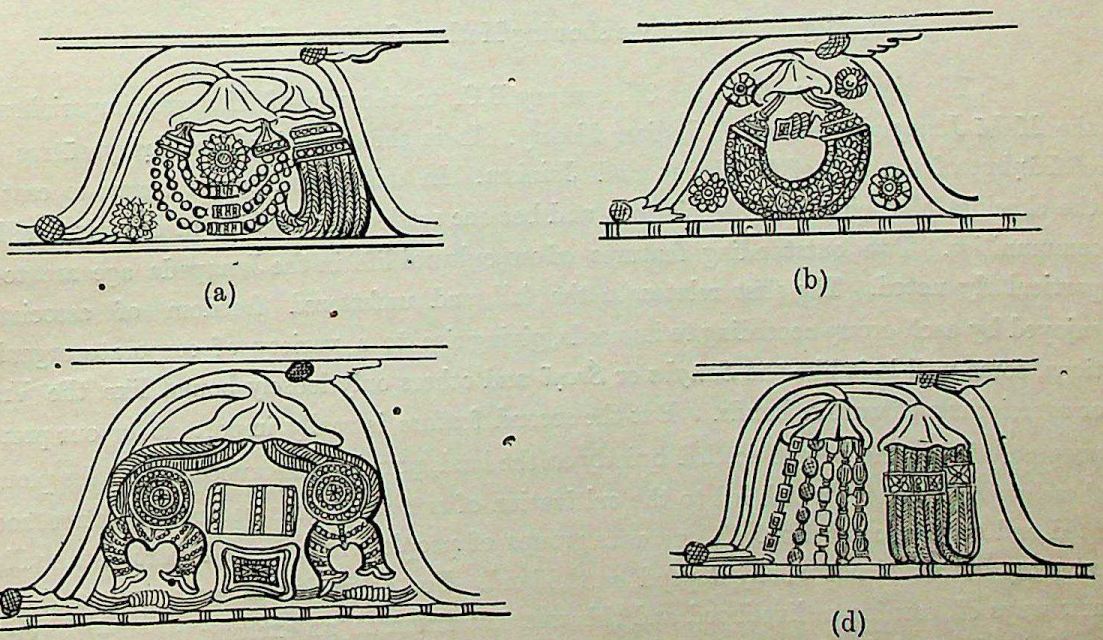


Fig. 3.



(a) (b) (c) (d)

Fig. 4. Kalpalatā motif producing ornaments and cloths (Bharhut)

been properly broached as yet. Recently my attention was drawn to the ring-stones of haematite found at Taxila (*Fig. 6*), Mathura, Kosam, Ahichchhatra, Bhita, Rajghat, Pataliputra and elsewhere. They represent a mother-goddess with alternating tree and animal motifs unconnected with any other objects of the historical period. A seal from Rajghat of the same material shows a bull with a crib before it similar to the Indus Valley unicorn and crib. It also bears a Brahmi inscription which I have not been able to decipher. It seems to be an important bit of evidence, a unique relic, but an isolated link in the chain of evidence that might be required to shed light on this obscure problem.

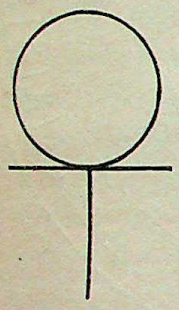


Fig. 5. Egyptian life motif. Ankh

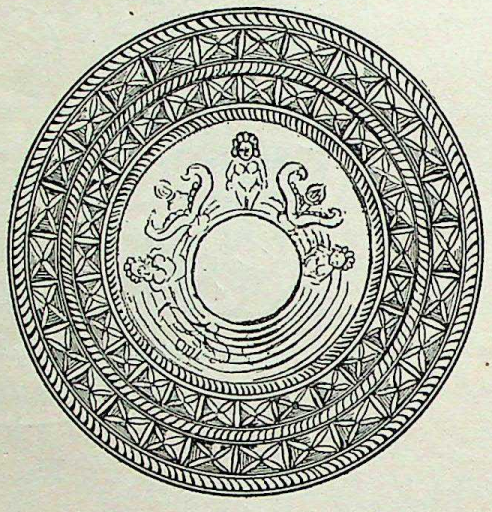


Fig. 6. Ring-stone showing Mother Goddess, Taxila

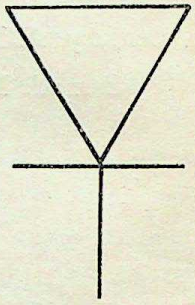


Fig. 7. The Vaijayant symbol

The time from about the 8th century B.C. to the rise of Mauryan imperialism is the *Mahā-Janapada* period of Indian history. It is the period of the Gṛihyasūtras and of Pāṇini, of the rise of Buddhism and Jainism. In this period people began to cast off the shackles of their tribal associations and became settled on the land in organized village communities. Two outstanding features of our cultural life in the Janapada age are to be particularly noted. The first relates to the full and unfettered freedom of association enjoyed by each group according to its needs, giving rise to a variety of corporate organizations, some well knit like the *Saṅgha* or *Śreṇī* and others only loosely bound like the Vrāta or associations of warlike bands. But the second feature is really important for our present purpose. With the people settled quietly on the land, pursuing the avocation of the plough, there emerged factors which led to the cultivation of arts and crafts as an imperative social need and economic function. There were groups of people which formed part of the village economy but could not wholly depend on the land. For them it was necessary to discover new ways of earning a livelihood and this was the origin of an exciting variety of *Śilpas* (crafts). The whole Janapada society, as if it were a team awoke to activity and threw itself into handicrafts. Any work done by hand, any occupation of manual skill, any

activity requiring the use of mind with manual cleverness was called *Śilpa*. Yāska tells us: "Proficiency in the professions appertaining to the life of a village bestows on an individual special distinction" (*Jānapadishu vidyāto purushavišesho bhavati*). An intensive cultivation of crafts was the hall mark of this age; the invention of a large number of appliances or skilful contrivances called *Yantras*, useful for agricultural and domestic life was a distinguishing feature of the civilization in this period, which is referred to by Manu as *Mahā-Yantra-pravartanam*. The distinction between fine art and crafts did not exist at that time. Pāṇini's definition of *Śilpa* includes dancers, musicians, instrumentalists (playing on *madduka* and *jharjhara*), and also barbers and carpenters. The material about the *Śilpas* in the *Jātakas* is to be viewed in this light.

New professions were being discovered and organized, each one looked upon with due regard as fulfilling a necessary social and economic need. The barber, carpenter, washerman, dyer, dancer, singer, gardener, mason, blacksmith, painter, snake-charmer, goatherd, potter, florist, weaver, tailor, arrow maker, wrestler and a host of other workers, constituted the rich pattern of the *Śilpas* in the Janapada society. It was essentially a *Śilpa*-culture integrated with the village economy.

The net contribution of this period was the emergence and crystalization of motifs and patterns of architecture and decoration in tangible form. Wood formed the principal medium of carving and for architectural purposes: the carpenter and the wood worker are referred to with greater esteem than the stone mason. The gateways and the railings executed in the Sunga period derived their ancestory from this earlier age. It was an art of wood transfeerred to stone.

A second feature of the Janapada period art was the outburst of an immense number of symbols—*lakshaṇas* as seen on the punch-marked coins. Indeed for about another five hundred years, the vogue of symbols became conspicious in Indian art. A study of the coin symbols with a view to their art history yet remains an unwritten chapter, but must prove of interest in assessing the full significance and value of many decorative patterns of Indian art.

But the most outstanding problem of this period is the investigation of the foreign contacts that India established with the Persia of Darius on the west, with the Sakas of Sākadvīpa in Central Asia settled near the *Kumuda* mountain (The Koumedia of Herodotos) beyond the Oxus and the Yuechis or the *Ṛishikas* of Central Asia. The evidence of Mahābhārata is positive about these early contacts. *Śakandhu* and *Karkandhu* of the grammatical literature in the *Vārtikas* of Kātyayana (4th century B.C.) point to the knowledge of the country of the Sakas and of the Karkas or the Karkians both of whom are referred to in the inscription of Darius in the 5th century B.C. A definite flow of

Western Asian motifs towards India seems to be predicated as a result of these contacts. The Assyrian passion for colossal animal forms, the Lion and the Bull, and the Babylonian repeat motif as seen in the representation of the Palm Tree, are clearly reflected in the decorative motifs of Bharhut and Sanchi. The winged and fabulous animals that we usually associate with the Sakas already appear in early Buddhist art. We know of another motif on the punch-marked coins and in sculpture viz. a triangle-surmounted standard. It appears to me to be the 'Standard' symbol or *Vaijayantī* (*Fig. 7*), the *Indrayashṭi* referred to in the Mahābhārata and said to be a banner raised in honour of Indra to mark the weal and prosperity of the whole Janapada. It has an obvious resemblance with the Life motif, Ankh (*Fig. 5*), that is first found in Egypt and then transmitted to other countries in Western Asia. The tradition of the Epic relating to the architect Maya executing the Assembly Hall of Yudhishṭhira after the pattern of the *Viśvakarmā Sabhā* can be explained only against a wider background of art extending beyond the borders of India. It cannot however be forgotten that whatever the extent of foreign exchanges in the realm of art may have been, the background of thought on which these were engrafted was essentially Indian. The symbolism of the Lion capital could hardly have been conceived except against the background of the religion of the *Dharmachakra* which once surmounted it.

The art of the Sunga period is an art of folk inspiration, a documentation of popular life and cult beliefs, it is dominated by an abandon and freedom peculiar to sylvan deities, the Yakshas and the Nāgarājas. There is in it no urban tension or sophistication, nor is the moral severity of the Buddha's religion impressed on its countenance. The figure of the Yogī Buddha is, so to say, unwanted in that art; the Buddha permeates it only as an influence.

The tension of the Buddha image would not accord with an art feeling of such universal consciousness. The Yakshas stand out pre-eminent in their own right; they are not yet the puny subordinated and accessory attendant figures that they become in Kushana art. The problem of Sunga art apart from its proper stylistic evaluation, concerns itself mainly with the detailed investigation of all the art forms and decorative motifs with special reference to their folk symbolism, their exposition from literary sources, specially the *Jātakas*, the Epics and the Jaina canons, and the restoration of their technical names. Much useful work was done in this line by Dr. Coomaraswamy in his essays on early Indian iconography and on ancient Indian architecture dealing with cities, city-gates and palaces. But there is still a vast amount of material in the Jaina sources, specially rich in this respect is the text called the *Rayāpaseniya*, in which we find an account of an ancient stūpa of the mythical Alkappa city, which seems to be a detailed, eyewitness description of one of the ancient Jaina stupas of Mathura built at the Kaṅkālī *Ṭīlā* site in the 2nd

century B.C. The terminology is extremely rich and the account of the *Padmavara Vedikā*, the Lotus Railing round the stūpa with the voluptuous female figures carved on the pillars is exceptionally true to facts taken from actual architecture. This study, I am glad to say, has been undertaken by my friend, Dr. Moti Chandra, with remarkable results.

The Kushana art continues further the same indigenous tradition of folk inspiration of the joy arising from the life of the senses and the pulsating buoyancy of open air feminine sports and pastimes, but their emphasis is increasingly human and the centre is shifting towards an urban civilization. The emergence of the Buddha image is the supreme gift of Kushana art. The image is not an abrupt or disruptive phenomenon ; it rather stands integrated to the preceding religious processes and is an outcome of the movement laying emphasis on personal devotion to a deity or person of divine rank, counted supreme amongst other godlings. The colossal free standing Buddha and Bodhisattva images cannot be separated from the preceding Parkham Yaksha types. The problem of the origin of the Buddha image had been furnished with an answer in its stylistic bearings long ago by Dr. Coomaraswamy. The key, however, to the priority of the chronological position between the schools of Mathura and Gandhara rests with archaeology and that key is still not forthcoming. The existence of temples of Bhagavān Vāsudeva in the time of Sodasa is however an established fact of archaeology and this at any rate preceded the known images of the Buddha.

The Buddha image introduced a revolutionary change in Indian sculpture and architecture. The images of gods and goddesses began to be executed in increasing numbers according to the dictates of an expanding pantheon. With the main attention focussed on the image, the railing receded into the background, and in the Gupta period the railing was absorbed or assimilated in the pattern of the raised platform or temple plinth, the *Jagatī-pīṭha*, such as we find at Devagarh in which upright pillars with male and female figures carved on them illustrating scenes from Kṛishṇa's life and the Rāmāyaṇa were fixed against a masonry wall.

The flat-roofed temple of the early Gupta shrines with its modest cella (*garbha-gṛiha*) is derived in its architectural pattern from the simple *Gandhakuṭīs* of the Kushana period. These were constructed for the colossal free standing images of the Buddha by erecting three vertical plain slabs on the three sides and covering them with a flat slab which was carved on its inside with the same decorative patterns and symbols as were seen on the parasol or *chhatra* (*Fig. 3*). In fact, square parasol slabs of this carved pattern have been recently discovered at Mathura showing clear devices and grooves for erecting the upright slabs (*Fig. 9*). Subsequently with the addition of a porch and a sikhara in the Gupta period the architectural pattern of the Hindu temple emerged completely and fully equipped for its further development.

During the Gupta period, Indian sculpture, painting, drama and music witnessed an all round efflorescence. The tremendous outburst of creative activity on a national scale, engulfing the country from Mirapur Khas in Sindh to Dahparbatiya on the Brahmaputra in Assam, established for the first time a national style of art distinguished by common characteristics and activating from numerous centres. There is as yet no adequate study which can be said to do justice to Gupta art comprising its rich sculpture, architecture, painting, terracottas, beads, pottery, and details of ornamentation, decorative motifs, styles of hairdressing and fashions in costumes and fabrics as they were developed in the age of Kālidāsa and Bāṇabhaṭṭa. A sumptuous volume like the Sanchi topes will have to be undertaken to present the material with suitable reproductions, and to interpret it in terms of the contemporary literary evidence. For no other period of Indian history is the cultural material so rich and so amply documented in its literature and art specimens as for the Gupta Age. We have, for example, reference to the various styles of hair, as *Alaka* also called *Valibhṛit keśa* (frizzled locks), *Bhramaraka* (Bee coiffure), *Lilā-mayūra Keśapāśa* (Peacock-feather style), the honey-comb style, the *sīmanta* parting of the hair and its decoration with a forehead jewel known as the *chaṭula tilakamaṇi*.

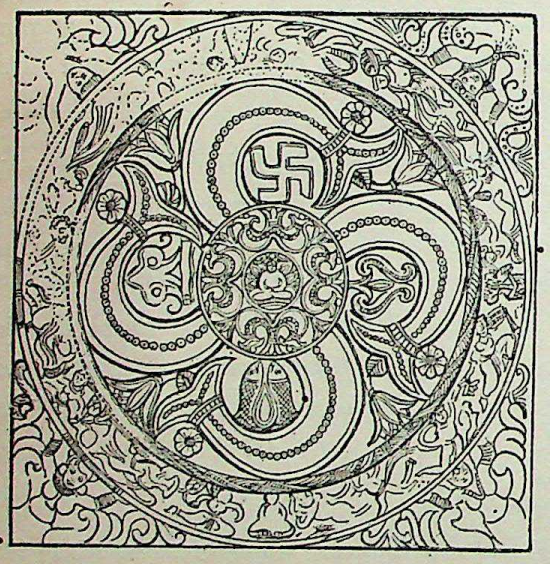


Fig. 8 Jaina. Āyāgapaṭṭa with *svastika* and *mīna-mithuna* etc. motifs. Mathura. 1st Century A.D.

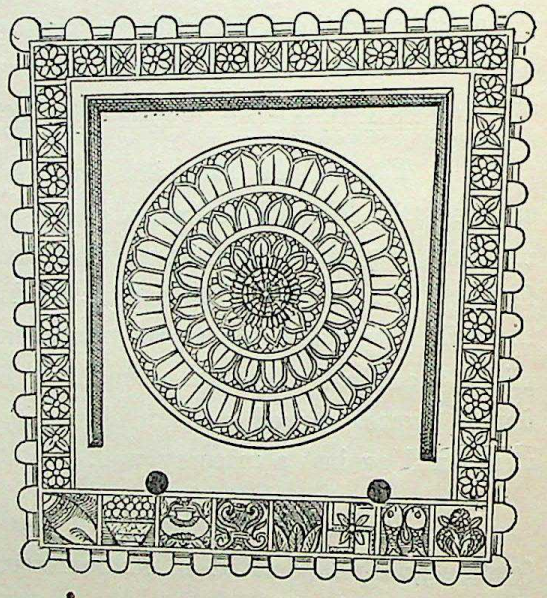


Fig. 9. Square parasol and flat top of the Gandha-Kuṭī (Mathura)

The art motifs in the works of Kālidāsa besides offering a rich field of study put us into possession of evidence about the date of the poet. For example, Kālidāsa refers for the first time to the motif of the two river goddesses Gangā and Yamunā carved on the temple doorways in human form and attending on the deity (*mūrte cha Gangā-Yamune*

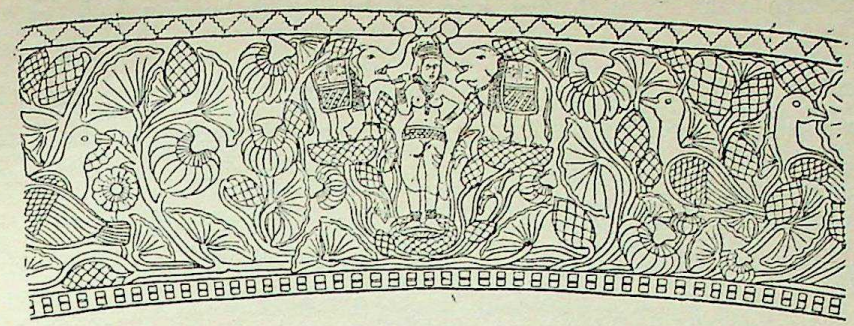


Fig. 10. Gaja-Lakshamī (Sanchi)

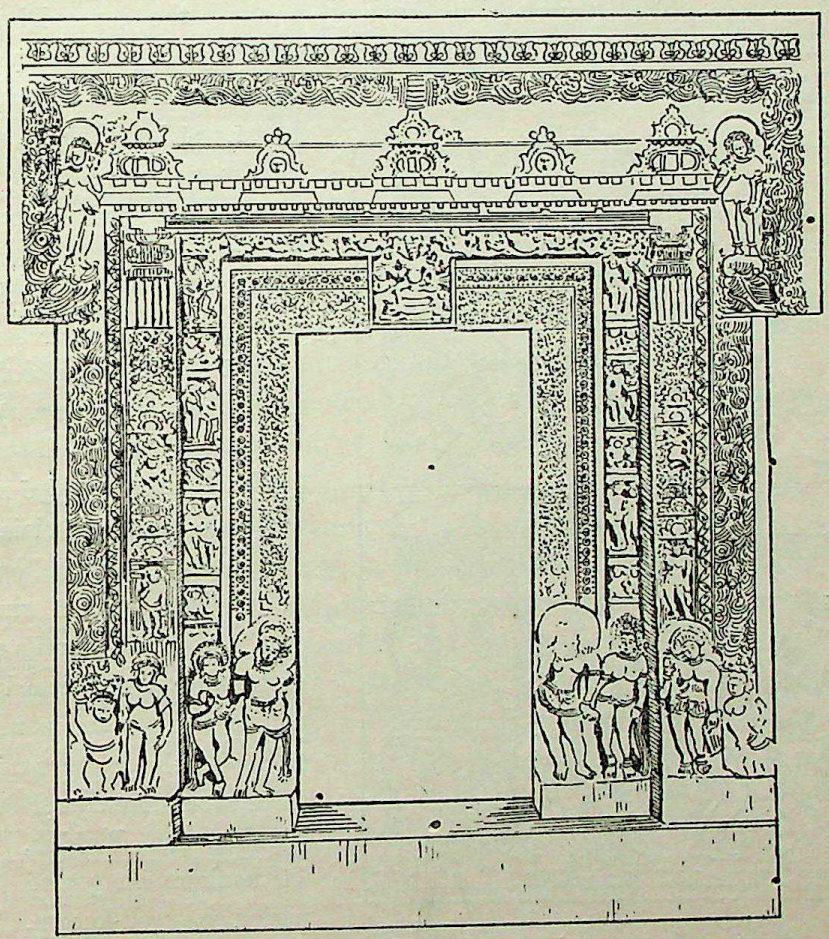


Fig. 11. Temple doorway showing Gangā & Yamunā (Devagarh)

tadānīm sachāmare devamāsevishātām) (Fig. 11). This agrees with the evidence of the Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa stating that the river-goddesses should be shown standing

on their respective vehicles with legs bent at knee and holding Full Vases in their hands[1].

Another typical Gupta feature is the reference to the conch and lotus symbols *Sankha-Padma-nidhis* carved on the jambs of doorways. According to the Vishṇudharmottara, the two jewels, the lotus and the conch, should be shown in their natural form (*Sankha-Padmau nidhī kāryau svarūpau*), and this is confirmed by Kālidāsa saying that the house of the exiled Yaksha in *Alakā* was painted with the figures of the conch and the lotus (*Dvāropānte likhitavapushau Sankha-Padmau*). This feature is clearly seen in Gupta art, on the flanking posts of the three niches in the walls of the Devagarh temple and on certain other pilasters of the Gupta period in Mathura art. The following additional references indicate the chronological bearings of Kālidāsa with the culture of the Gupta period: The goddess Kali holding a skull, the seven Divine Mothers (*Mātaraḥ*); Kārttikeya riding a peacock (*mayūra-pṛishṭhāśaryī Guha*), Vishṇu sleeping on Śesha (*Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu*) (Fig. 12); Vishṇu seated on the coils of a serpent (*Bhogi-bhogāsanāsīna Vishṇu*), as the one in the image on the lintel (*lalāta-bimba*) of the Devagarh temple; Rāvaṇa lifting Kailāsa; the dwarfish attendants of Vishṇu partly in human and partly in their natural form (*jalajāsi-gadaśārṅga-chakra-lāñchhita mūrtibhiḥ, Raghuvamsa*); the halo resembling a full-blown lotus (*padmātapatra chhāyā-maṇḍala*) as contrasted with the plain halo of the Kushana period with only a margin of scallops, etc. A more detailed study of all the motifs and elements of decoration mentioned by the poet and seen in art and painting is likely to render the picture of corelationships even more complete. The lotus halo of the Buddha, Vishṇu and Tīrthankara images of the Gupta period are well-known. According to the Bṛihatsamhita the halo should be covered with a pattern of geese with

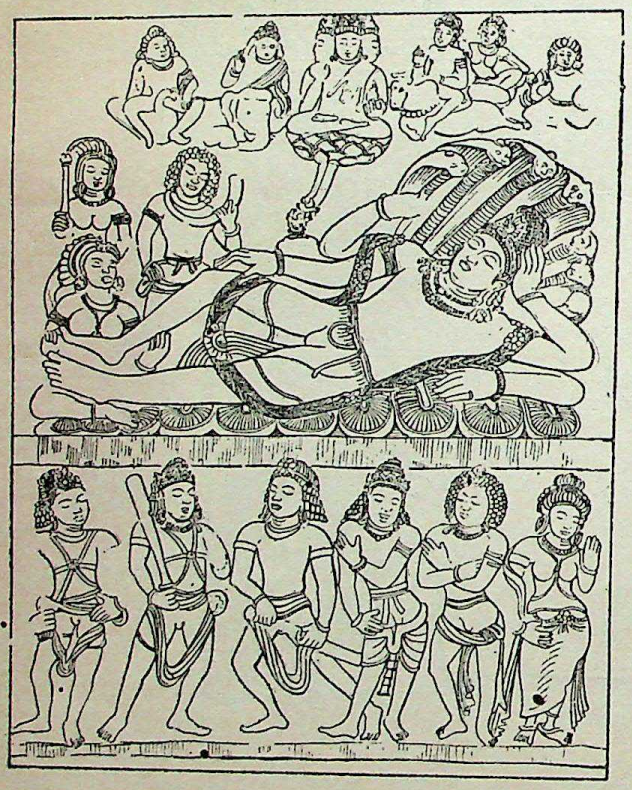


Fig. 12. Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu on the lintel of the Devagrah Temple.

[1] सरितां सशरीरणां वाहनानि प्रदर्शयेत्। पूर्णकुम्भकराः कार्यास्तथा नमितजानवः॥

—*Vishṇudharmottara 3-42-51*

feathers treated in conventionalized scrolls, adorned with pearl festoons (*muktāphalopachita -pralamba-mālāvila*) and these features are corroborated by the actual specimens.

The cultural history of the Gupta Age stretched itself into the 7th century. The *Kādambarī* and the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa written in the time of Harsha provide us with art evidence about iconography, ornamentation, drapery, decorative motifs, furniture, utensils, trappings of horses and elephants, etc., which is extremely valuable for an understanding of the material culture of the transitional period between the Gupta and the medieval epochs. The importance of the *Harshacharita* as a cultural treatise cannot be over-estimated. I have recently come across references there to two kinds of foreign imported textiles, firstly *Stavaraka* manufactured in Iran and exported on one side to India and on the other to Arabia where it finds mention in the description of the raiments of the Houries in Paradise ; and secondly to a textile of Central Asian origin called *Pringa* which was a kind of damask silk of one colour. The many coloured striped drapery of Ajanta is referred to as *Indrayudhambara* the cloth resembling the rainbow; the tie and dye process is also mentioned. This varied material has to be properly presented and interpreted in the light of the actual evidence from art.

The problem of Indian art terminology is a very vast one for which the available material is extremely rich. It is embodied in specialized texts like the Vishṇudharmottara, the Chitrasūtra part of it, the Mānsāra, or the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra, etc. The stray references in the Pali, Sanskrit and Prakrit literature amplify it. Dr. Coomaraswamy in his *Indian Architectural Terms* made a beginning with this study. Mr. Sivaramamurti at one time contributed fairly extensive articles on the art references in the various classical *Kavyas*. Dr. Moti Chandra has bagged a rich harvest of such terms in his amply documented papers relating to Indian costumes, coiffure and cosmetics from the Vedic period to the Gupta Age. I am drawing specific attention to them for the reason that the terms which have been clearly identified and assessed therein should now be adopted and introduced in our art books. The restoration of Indian art terminology is the condition precedent for the proper understanding of Indian art motifs, patterns and forms. The specialized texts are awaiting authoritative editing, even the Vishṇudharmottara chapters on iconography and the Chitrasūtra chapters on painting require fresh examination, and these studies are bound to remain incomplete unless correlated with actual examples. The Vishṇudharmottara refers to Bahirava with round eyes (*vṛitta-lochana*) protruding teeth (*daṁshṭra-karāla vadana*) and broad nostrils (*pulla-nāsāpuṭa*). In a terracotta image of Bhairava the Śiva temple at Ahichchhatra I found these three features holding good. In the case of the Sun images, Varāhamihira refers to his girdle as *avyanga* (*Bṛihatsaṁhitā* Ch. 58.47) and the same is mentioned in the Vishṇudharmottara as *yaviyanga* (Ch. 67,3), which are only attempts to render into Sanskrit the Parsi girdle called *aivyaonhan*. We have before us a great quantity of terminological material to be evaluated and cleared up.

A third fruitful source of art terminology is the oral tradition. If properly tapped, much useful material could be got out of it. It is illustrated by the list of *Some Art and Archaeological Terms* published by me in the Museums Journal, and in a much more convicing way in Dr. Moti Chandra's work *The Technique of Mogul Painting*, in which several hundreds of painting terms were obtained from Ustad Ram Prasad at Banaras who was the last surviving painter of the Mogul schools in that city.

A typological study and classification of Indian clay figurines might be mentioned as another possible source of cultural material unsurpassed even by sculpture for its range and variety. The clay figurines present as it were an inventory of the types of men and women in the several walks of society in a particular period.

We find among them types not only of gods and goddesses but kings and courtiers, domestic servants, warriors and palace attendants, monks and nuns, horse-riders and elephant keepers, hunters and gamesmen, dwarfs and acrobatic figures etc. The toy figurines mostly provide material relating to the children's art in ancient India and this line of approach should also be explored further.

The study and interpretation of Indian art is pregnant with great possibilities for our coming cultural renaissance. As a nation the Indians were once the citizens of a beautiful world of forms. The last two centuries disenfranchised us from that heritage and tradition. An inroad of exotic forms affected all spheres of Indian life and our own motifs and forms of painting, sculpture, decorative designs, architecture, furniture, dress, even our flowers, perfumes, household utensils, music, dance and drama, etc., suffered heavily, retreating under the fire of aggressive European vogues and fashions. India's struggle for *Sva-rājya* can only be interpreted as a struggle of her soul to rehabilitate hereself in her own forms of life and culture. *Svarājya* must mean a cultural rebirth. With the dawn of Independence the destiny of Indian culture must be fulfilled once again and the national soul must reassert itself. In the words of the Ṛigveda, the old and the new generations have to enkindle the flame of knowledge and culture. Potent signs of the coming revival are visible on all sides. Much depends on the people's will to attain their cultural rehabilitation. The *Dharmachakra* has become our natural symbol through a prophetic decision of rare wisdom. The *Dharmachakra* must be understood by a modern mind as the wheel of culture. This *Dharmachakra* must revolve steadily both in space and time, imparting a new tone, quality and richness to life's manifold manifestations under the Indian sky. May the Goddess of Beauty lead to this fulfilment.

3. VIŚVAKARMĀ

'Mighty in mind and power is Viśvakarmā, Maker, Disposer and most lofty Presence', Viśvakarmā represents the highest image (*parmāśaṁdṛik*). According to Meister Eckhart, "Any thing known or born is an image". Thus the world of Name and Form is the image of Viśvakarmā. It is his lofty Presence, his apparition, that was once concealed in the highest heaven and has now become manifest as the immanent world of names and forms. The visible objects which Viśvakarmā is creating constitute This All (*idam sarvam*), i.e., the totality of all images which we grasp through the mind and senses. Viśvakarmā in his undifferentiated form, i.e., in principium (*agre*) contains within Him all that has become known or born later on. Each image or icon is a symbol of the divine supreme reality, and is the manifest form of that which existed in the mind of the creator. There is an Original Model (*pratirūpa*) which unfolds itself in diverse forms (*rūpam rūpam pratirūpo babhūva, Ṛigveda* VI. 47. 18). What the original model (*pratirūpa*) is we do not know ; or else we know it through the forms in which it is imaged. To see Him, which is the same as to understand Him, we must find Him out in every figure of which He was the original. The model is archetypal for all casts, figures and images. Viśvakarmā is that Archetype (*prathamachchhada*).

To know the model one should know the figure. The figures are within our purview. They alone can be seen in concrete form. The great law by which Viśvakarmā creates is the equation : *yathā=tathā*. The visible world is *yathā* of which the variety and diversity are infinite, beyond the power of words and thought to comprehend in fullness. *Yathā* is equal to This, and *tathā* is equal to That. The source of *yathā* is *tathā*. This is rooted in That. The latter is beyond name and form. It is the supreme reality, the lofty presence in the highest heaven (*parama vyoman*).

In later imagery Vishṇu is called Viśvakarmā (in the *Vishṇusahasranāma*). He is two-fold, viz. *parama rūpa*, same as the *paramā samdṛik* of the *Ṛigveda*. That which is *parama rūpa is arūpa ;* the Highest Form is identical with the Formless, so says the *Vishṇu Purāṇa* (VI. 7. 54) :

'Tachcha Vishṇoḥ paramarūpam arūpākhyamanuttamam
Viśva-svarūpa-vairupya-lakshaṇam paramātmanaḥ'.

The cosmic forms constitute the *vairūpya*, the manifold appearance of the deity. Each of them in its strict definition is an apparition, a *yaksha*, merely name and form without real substance. The *yogin* alone can comprehend the higher form (*pararūpa*) ; others can think only of the material forms of images. Meditation of images is essential, the normal way for the functioning of the mind.

This material world of images is the endless world of art. It is the mind (*chitta*) that depicts the images (*chitra-karma*). A mental concept is raised in the mind of the sculptor or the painter, and the same is then projected as sculpture, painting, etc. The world of forms is called Prajāpati, i.e. the creator in his cosmic aspect. It is also *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the potentiality of all manifest forms. In short, whatever is here is the material manifest form of Vishṇu (*mūrtam etad hareh rūpam*). The sun and moon, stars and planets, men and animals, mountains, oceans and rivers, plants and roots, the animate and inanimate—all that which is the realm of art or images is to be realised through meditation. The visual aspect of an image is a very fractional aspect, limited in time and space, almost a lifeless concept, but each image has to be meditated upon as a symbol of an act of Viśvakarmā.

The operation of the mind brings into being all the various kinds of human art. The *deva-śilpa* is the work of the Creator's mind, the *mānusha-śilpa* that of the human mind. The mind is the storehouse of all the various pictorial forms form the beginning to the end. Indeed it has been said that the mind (*chitta*) is even more various-and-pictorial (*chittatara*) than painting (*chitta* in Pāli), because in the latter the conception is not perfectly realised while the pictures made by the mind are faultless. (Coomaraswamy, "An Early Passage on Indian Painting"; *Aṭṭhasālinī*, PTS ed. pp. 64).

Indian art primarily emphasises and insists on the *intellectual act*. Higher art is a sublime way of the mind. What is now taken to be the *sensible* aspect, i.e. 'grasped by the senses', is the aesthetic form with all its inherent principles of beauty. It is only a limited portion of that infinite world which appertains to the realm of mind of a creative artist. He is to be compared with Viśvakarmā on the human level of reference. The concrete is the lower form (*avara rūpa*) and the mental the higher (*para rūpa*). The wise man is he who discriminates the higher form; the lower or material image gives him no real pleasure (*rūpa na ramate*).

Viśvarkarmā is spoken of as lofty in mind (*vimanā*). He is the Father of the Eye (*chakshushah pitā*). This Eye is the same as mind or spirit, the wisdom of the Creator. It is this Eye which is sometimes identified with the Sun, because the latter is Viśvarūpa, the maker of all forms or lightimages. In the primeval eye of Viśvakarmā there was a reflection on 'the first day of creation' (*agre*) of the world image. It was that reflection (*ābhāsa*) which has become mirrored in the shining stuff of this world. The world subsists in its formless simplicity in the Creator. It is undifferentiated in the beginning; subsequently Indra (mind) creates different light-images (*rūpam rūpam maghavā bo-bhavīti*).

The worship of an image is itself an art, a 'technique', as clearly stated in the *Vishṇu Purāṇa*. "First the worshipper should mediate on the differentiated form (*mūrta rūpa*) of Vishṇu. He should make his mind strong, i.e., intent on concentration when looking at the image". This corresponds to the stage of *dhāraṇā* in Yoga. He should understand the form

and meaning of each limb of which the image is a complete expression. The decorative ornaments and the various poses of the hands like *varada* and *abhaya*, should also interest him.

Next he should turn his attention to the higher stages, i.e., lead his mind on from the concrete aspect to the intellectual concept. For this he should think of Vishṇu as free from his attributes, like the conch, wheel, bow and club, and only meditate on his tranquil form (*praśānta rūpa*). Only the beaded rosary is to be imagined in this form. Then he should meditate on the form in which all ornaments and decorations have been eliminated and the *deva* appears as a unitary person (*ekāvayava*). The next stage is that in which only the divine feeling inspires the mind of the devotee. This is *dhyāna*. Ultimately the worshipper attains to the highest condition of the *yogī* when his mind becomes one with the divine being and loses all distinctions of meditation (*dhyāna*), one who meditates (*dhyātā*) and on whom one meditates (*dhyeya ; Vishṇu Purāṇa*, VI. 7. 86-91). This is virtually the same as a vision of the *parama rūpa*, or Viśvakarmā's loftiest presence of the *Ṛigveda*. The worshipper is now transformed into a seer or *yogī*.

Indian art theory does not belittle the visual symbolism of art. It links it in the first instance to the verbal symbolism which is scripture. The two are co-related and essential to each other. But ultimately both have to yield place to that which transcends all symbolism, which is an ideal *tathā* or Suchness. The verbal symbolism plays an important part in Indian aesthetic tradition. The scripture is the Veda, the source of all *nāma-rūpa*, viz., the visual symbolism of art. The Veda is absolutely essential for art comprehension. It explains that which is known intuitively (*manasā niśchita*), or what has been visualised (*taddhyātam*). The *ṛishis* saw with an eye which is gifted with the 'seeing of ideas' (*mantra-drashṭāraḥ*). It is an ever-happening process. Any one who creates a thought-form (*mānasa sṛishṭi*) is a *ṛishi* to the extent of that intellectual operation. Having produced in the mind, the artist proceeds to the production of the concrete or visual symbolism as the various forms of art.

The gods—all the gods and goddesses in the various cults of the past and future—were gathered together in the primeval germ of Viśvakarmā. Whatever man's fancy has created in the religious disciplines of the past or whatever it will create in future, is an intellectual emanation from Viśvakarmā who is one and only one name-giver to many gods (*yo devānāṁ namadhā eka eva, Ṛig.*, X. 82.3).

Viśvakarmā is *sādhu-karmā*, one whose works are perfect specimens (*Ṛig.*, X. 81.6). His creation is an ever expanding process in time and space (*havishā vāvṛidhāṇā, Ṛig.*, X. 81.6). His highest and lowest natures (*parama, avama dhāma*) exist side by side with a connecting intermediate link (*madhyama dhāma*). These three correspond to the triple forms of art referred to above. The visual symbolism is the lowermost nature (*avama, kshara, mūrta*). The mental or the verbal symbol of scripture is the mid-most form, a station on the way to the highest reality. It is the light-image (*bhā-rūpa*) or reflection (*ābhāsa*), an intellectual act which

is the 'art in the artist', as Coomarswamy has put it. The highest form (*parama dhāma*) of Viśvakarmā is that which is formless (*arūpa*), i.e., in which only the highest Unitary Principle (*tattva*) transcends all particulars (*viśesha*) and definitions and in which all forms are to be seen in identity with every other. In a true realisation of art these three distinctive natures, which are at the same time linked by a unifying thread, should be borne in mind.

What a rich and liberal patron is Viśvakarmā under whose effulgent patronage such magnificent art forms (*deva-śilpa*) are being produced? The common or average man remains ignorant of the mystery and grandeur of this art. The liberal patron, however, is continually producing. His imagination is limitless and his capacity to produce forms is boundless. There is a purpose in His creative work, viz., to aid in the great continual process of life as expressed both in nature and man. The archetypal parents (*Dyāvā-Pṛithivī*) when they create are soaked with the life-sap and their cosmic thread is far extended and firmly fastened to the centre (*nābhi*, 'navel') of the Creator.

II

INDUS VALLEY ART

4. INDUS VALLEY ART

The earliest material of Indian art is found in the Indus Valley. This forms a part of a civilisation extending from the valley of the Sarasvatī-Sutlej, along the Indus, upto Saurāshtra. It was an extension of over fifteen hundred miles with about a hundred sites clustered in three chief sectors, with a uniform culture from the point of view of religion, life and arts. This is termed proto-historic, coming after the pre-historic ages as known under palæolithic, microlithic and neolithic with their respective stone tool industries mostly in the principal river valleys of the Deccan, south of the Vindhyas. The proto-historic phase was at one time assigned to the millenrium, C. 3500—2500B.C., but now generally shifted to C. 2500—1500 B.C. as inclining towards a relationship with historical beginnings of early India. The Indus Valley people have much greater importance as holding the key to the patterns of Indian civilisation than perhaps has been realised upto now. In religion and art many a form of Indian culture owes their origin to them. Those people seem to be intensely creative, capable of evolving a highly civilised urban life in which both beauty and order occupied a prime place. Almost one third of India covering about half a million square miles stretching from Rupar in Ambala District to Bhagatrao on the Kim river (midway between the Narbda and Tapti) the southernmost settlement known so far, was the arena of origin and growth of the Indus Valley civilisation. Wheeler rightly calls it the most extensive pre-classical civilisation.

The sites of this culture are dispersed along three routes, viz. Dvārāvatī-Ānarta route, Sind route and Sarasvatī route. There were both villages and big towns of which Harappa[1] on the Ravi was the capital of the Sarasvati-Parushṇī province in the north, and Mohenjodaro on the Indus, in the centre, was the capital of the other province of an equal size. These two capital-towns were fortified citadels, each of about three miles perimeter, and were the seats of strong monarchy, feeling secured within defence walls and leading a life of luxury with rich nobles and middle men fed by a toiling population. The number of richmen's houses and the two granaries, one at Mohenjodaro inside the citadel and the other at Harappa out side it with workmen's quarters, point to the pattern of life lived there. Along the banks of the Sarasvatī about 25 Harappan sites have been found. It seems that their penetration reached up to the fringe of the Gangatic basin as shown by the Harappan site of Ukhlīna, 19 miles west of Meerut. In the Sind sector the site of Mohenjodaro is just towards the west of the Indus. Eighty miles below on the east of the Indus is Chanhudaro. On the west the farthest site is Sutkagendor near the coast in Baluchistan.

The Indus people were using both land and sea routes as shown by the latest discovery of their sites. There was a land route starting from Dvārāvatī and going through Hālar

[1] Harappa has been rightly identified with Hariyūpīyā, ṚV. VI. 27.5.

and Ānarta between the Sarasvatī and the Māhī touched Nagarī (ancient Madhyamikā near Chittor) and through the desert of south Rajasthan connected with the Indus at a point by the Mīrpurkhas Stūpa of later limes. On this route in the desert is the Harappan site of Āhar. It is expected that such remains may be exposed at Nagarī itself[1]. The Harappan also took advantage of the sea-route lying at their feet along the eight hundred miles of coast line. In Saurāshṭra the site of Lothal at the head of the Gulf of Cambay in Ahmedabad District was a sea-port with a dock-yard. Other sites are Rangpur (Dist. Jhālāwar, Saurāshṭra, twenty miles to the south-east of Līmbdī), Gop and Somnath, the two settlements of Mehgam on the right bank and Telod on the left of Narbda estuary and the third one of Bhagatrao, carry the migration of these pople 500 miles south-east of Mohenjodaro, a distance equal to the north-east arm upto Harappa.

The Indus Valley people seem to have exploited to the utmost the possibilities of these twofold approaches by land and sea. In India they obtained the yellow stone from Jaisalmer; the fine green amazonite not from the Nilagiries as was once thought but from the Hirapur plateau north of Ahmedabad (as pointed out by Wheeler); amethyst from the Deccan trap; copper from Khetri mines in Rajasthan; tin for making bronze from Hazaribag, the only Indian source with extant old workings. Lapis lazuli used by them had its source in Badakhshan mines in north-east Afghanistan; turquoise in Khorasan in north-eastern Persia; and jadeite (hard jade) in the Pamirs and eastern Turkistan. The supply of lime-stone for carving images etc. was obtained from Sukkur; gypsum for making lime-mortar from the Kīrthar hills; and marble from Rajputana. Gold used for ornaments, fillets and beads came probably from South India, or in the form of washed gold from Central Asia through trade channels. Silver used for vessels and ornaments may have been obtained from Afghanistan and Persia where it is seperated from lead. They were thus in contact with south India, east India, Rajputana, Gujrat, and western Afghanistan through the Bolan Pass, and with Persia through the Makran desert in Baluchistan. Their contact with Mesopotamia is proved by the discovery of seals with pictographic script at Ur, Kish, Susa, Lagash and Tell Asmar, together with several art motifs, as knobbed pottery, vessels with mat-pattern, small boxes with compartments, and some special kinds of beads, etc.

Town Planning and Architecture:

Harappa and Mohenjodaro are brick-built capital cities with rampart walls and gateways. The explored remains at both places demonstrate the acropolis to be a parallelogram of 400—500 yds. north-south by 200—300 yds. east-west. The remarkable thing is the defence wall, 45 ft. wide at Harappa tapering upwards and built of mud bricks with a revetment of baked bricks 4 ft. wide on the outside. The rampart wall had gateways of which the one on

[1] For the Dvārāvatī–Ānarta–Sauvīra–Sarasvatī route see Petavatthu commentary Paramattha-Dīpanī, II.9.1,p.84; Bhāgavata, I.10. 34-35 and X.71. 21-22.

the west was explored revealing a re-entrant side and a system of guard-rooms. The wall was punctuated at frequent intervals by bastions or towers projecting in some cases higher than the wall. In the description of the planning of historical towns the defence wall appears as a regular feature raised on wide foundations (वप्रस्योपरि प्राकारम्) and both mud-brick ramparts (पांसु प्राकार) and baked brick walls (इष्टका प्राकार) are mentioned. The later texts also make mention of a surrounding moat (परिखा) but the excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro have not yet reported the presence of such an important feature, which seems to have been absent owing to the proximity of the rivers.

The town inside the citadel was divided by broad streets into a grid system of which the regularity is amazing and found nowhere else in the ancient world, for example at Ur where the streets are winding like village lanes. The streets in the Indus Valley cut at right angles running east-west and north-south dividing the city into blocks. A very noteworthy feature is that this regularity of plan conceived at the outset was maintained with great fidelity even later, which shows that a civic authority enforced strictly its building laws and that the people on their part seem to have offered willing obedience to both town-planning and municipal sanitation. There were no encroachments on public roads by the builders of houses and subsequent structures were raised on earlier foundations well observing the original alignment. This entracts admiration at least for the early setllers who were more prosperous, better organised and more mindful of the laws than those who came later.

The main street at Mohenjodaro cleared over half a mile is 33 ft. wide permitting several rows of wheeled carriages to pass up and by down. It is intersected by some similar broad streets, dividing the city into blocks, and by roads nine to twelve feet in width, and these again by lanes and alleys four feet upwards. None of the streets was paved with bricks. The height of brick-built walls as preserved along the streets is about eighteen feet whereas in the lanes it is upto twenty-five feet since the houses there are better preserved. The houses in the blocks were compactly built with common walls but sometimes two houses were separated by small intervening spaces about a foot wide. The entrance to the houses was generally placed in the lanes to ensure security and privacy. Many houses were two-storied, to accommodate an over-crowded population, the upper storey being reached mostly by a staircase in the courtyard, but sometimes also straight from the street. The walls are plain without any recessing, jambs or decoration. Windows are rare, only a few alabaster and pottery grills being found. Lime-stone although plentiful in the Sukkur quarries is used rarely. An average house measured 27′ to 30′ and a large one double this size. The ceiling was supported most likely on wooden rafters for which square and round holes were provided in the walls at proper height. The roof consisted of a rush mat below and a layer of rammed clay above. Rain water passed through pottery drains opening on the streets. Doors to the houses ordinarily measure 3′4″ in width with about double the height which were closed with shutters ; but larger doors upto

7′10″ width also exist. The columns were built of bricks and were either square or rectangular in section ; only in one case it was tapering. But no round column was found. In one doorway a corbelled arch has been used to close the space, otherwise wooden lintels seem to have been used like those used in villages until recently.

The rooms had unpaved floors of beaten earth except in the bath-rooms and latrines which were made impervious by the use of very finely joined masonry made of rubbed bricks. In some of the rooms there were big pottery storage-jars (*Kumbhī*) the like of which in Sind are used even today (called *Godī*). The houses had kitchens with *chūlhās* made of bricks. But much more frequently round ovens with an aperture below either made of brick or clay were used like the *tandūr* of the present day used all over Sind and Punjab and similar to those in Mesopotamia in ancient days. The bathrooms were generally placed on the street-side on the ground floor but in rich men's houses on the upper floor with arrangement for spill-water to flow in a channel built through the width of the wall and connected with the drain outside.

DRAINAGE :

The matchless drainage system, not found anywhere in the ancient world, is a credit to the genius of the Indus Valley people and a proof of their developed sense of domestic and municipal sanitation. Each street and lane was provided in the centre with a brick paved channel with bricks on two sides finely jointed with mud mortar or lime or gypsum. The bigger drains were about one and a half foot wide covered generally with loose stones and the smaller half in size covered with bricks. They were connected with tributary drains from each house, and care was taken to lead the water pass through a cess-pit which retained its solid contents before overflowing plain water entered the public drain. Both were regularly cleaned by a fastidious observance of sanitary laws. This accords quite well with the superior hygienic sense of the people as indicated by their bathrooms, pottery-pipes, sumps, closed drains, brick-lined wells and above all the Great Bath. Indeed the cleanliness of the body seems to have been developed as a religious cult with these people. If the rich finds of jewellery, beads of semi-precious stones and decorative pieces of ivory and shell be added to this picture, it would be permissible to infer about their belief that the body is the SELF (Ātmā) which should be worshipped and beautified in this life and preserved in burials after death. That this was an Asura belief and custom is stated in the Chhāndogya Upanishad.[1]

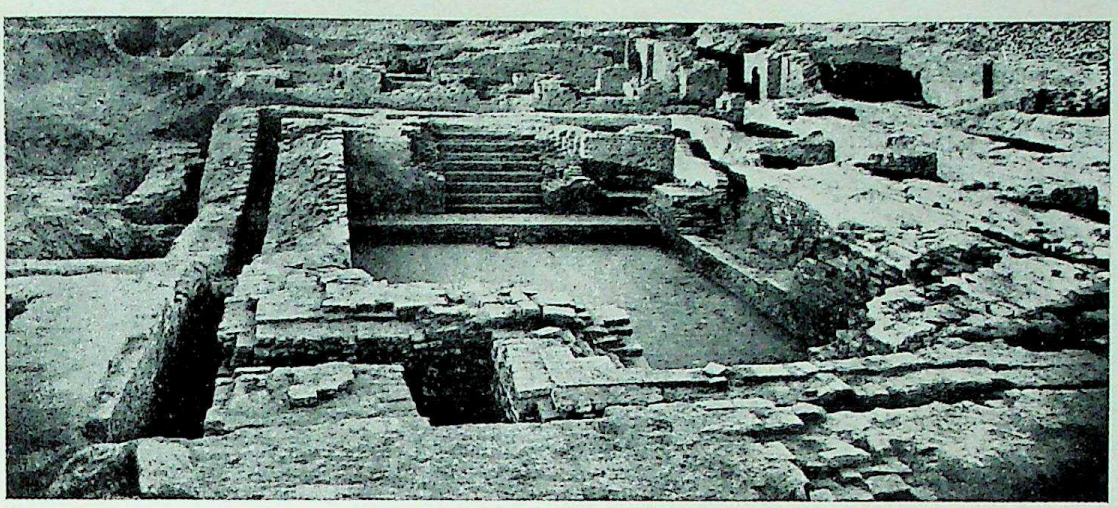
WELLS :

The supply of plentiful fresh water depended on wells which were found in almost every big house, ranging in diameter from 2′ to 7′, more usually 3′, built with wedge-shaped bricks and having a small coping and paved steening.

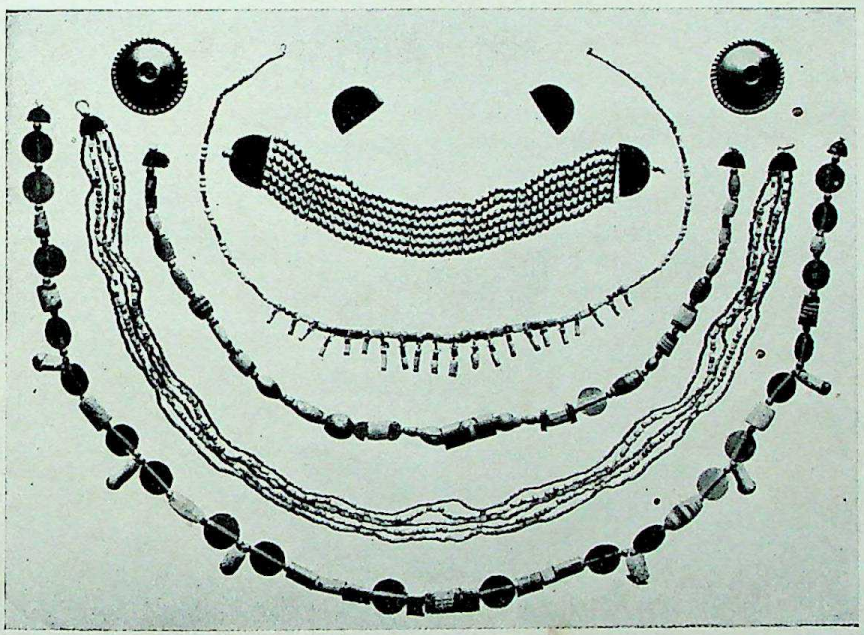
[1] असुराणां ह्येषोपनिषत् । प्रेतस्य शरीरं भिक्षया वसनेनालंकारेणेति संस्कुर्वन्ति ।

—*Chhāndogya Upanishad* 8.8.5.

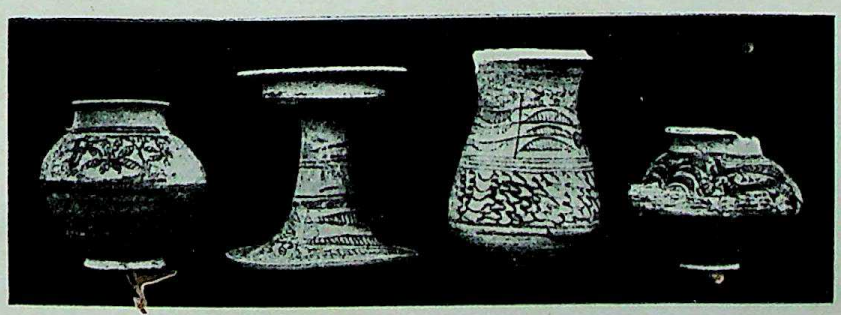
PLATE I.



A. Great Bath. Mohenjo-daro.



B. Jewellery. Indus Valley.



C. Painted Pottery. Indus Valley.

An idea of the architectural attainments of the Indus Valley people, maybe obtained from the contingent of important buildings found within the citadel or the so-called Stūpa mound at Mohenjodaro, e.g. the Great Bath, an Assembly Hall, the so-called "College Building" with numerous paved rooms, a courtyard and a grand staircase, all pointing to its character as a royal palace, and last of all a Granary recently explored by Wheeler corresponding to the elaborate Granary of Harappa, the latter having round brick platforms for crushing of grain and also workmen's quarters. The Assembly Hall, raised on twenty pillars arranged in four rows of five each, is a spacious building, 85′ square, and must have been used for an important public purpose. Mackay takes it to be a market hall, and Marshall a place for religious congregation; but perhaps it was of a multi-purpose character, being used both as a *Sabhā* and a city-guild office, corresponding to the *Saṁthāgāra* of later times.

The most impressive monument left behind by the Indus Valley people is the Great Bath (*Mahā-Kuṇda*) (39′ long, 23′ wide, 8′ deep) reached by flights of steps on two sides and forming the core of a big hydropathic establishment (180′×108′) surrounded by several rows of double-storied rooms for changing clothes etc. and also some bath-rooms. It was supplied with fresh water from the adjoining well. Great care was taken to make it impervious in the floor paved with bricks on edge, and by three parallel vertical brick-walls, the first plastered on the inside and plugged on the outside by 1″ thick coat of bitumen after which ran the second and the third wall separated by mudfilling, all made compact as several parts of one whole enclosing device. It must have been frequently refilled as indicated by the emptying outlet in one corner connected with a big corbelled drain. An institution of this elaborate nature must have had special significance for the builders most probably used for religious ablutions.

The polity of Mohenjodaro giving shelter inside a citadel to an aristocratic population with an authoritarian ruler is in full accord with the granary of massive construction (150′×75′) divided into 27 blocks of solid masonry with attached loading and unloading platforms. The blocks supported a timber superstructure for storage proper and were regularly arranged so as to ensure perfect ventilation. It appears that both at Mohenjodaro and Harappa were granaries of similar dimensions, but the one at Harappa comprising six units had been excavated earlier. The agricultural wealth of a toiling peasantry flowed forth into royal coffers for the maintenance of a well provided urban population.

The several monuments peculiar to the citadel throw light on the political and social organisation, the granary corresponding to the *Koshṭhāgāra*, the Assembly Hall to the *Sābhā* or *Saṁthāgāra*, the "College" to the *Prāsāda* or Royal Palace, the Great Bath to the Royal *Pnshkariṇī* zealously guarded. Each one of these institutions and their emplacement within fortified walls agrees quite well with what we know of similar institutions in historical times associated with a centralised kingly authority with the capital town and palace across the road. What remains to complete this picture is a religious establishment which it is expected lies below the Buddhist stūpa.

The copious art material offers firm proof of the refined taste of these people. They had developed the arts of stone sculpture, casting bronze figurines, making wheeled pottery finished with painted designs, modelling human and animal clay figurines, carving ivory and shell pieces for inlay work, cutting semi-precious stones for a variety of beads, turning gold and silver into ornaments and making various objects of copper such as tools, weapons and domestic utensils. The three major items of civilized life, viz. agriculture, weaving and writing were also fully developed.

SCULPTURE :

Sculpture, though pieces are limited in number (11 from Mohenjodaro), is enough to show that the plastic medium of stone was handled with adequate skill by the Harappan artists. The steatite head and bust (7″ ht.) of a person, with a fillet fastened to the hair, wearing a trefoil patterned shawl and having pruned beard and a shaven upper lip as in Sumer figures and peculiar slanting eyes similar to those of deities at Kish and Ur, points to the probable identification that this was also some divine image (*Fig. 21*). Scholars have generally taken it as a priest or *Yogī*, but in the Indian tradition the *Yogī* type suits very well as the mode of a divine figure, and there is much less probability of a human priest being depicted as a god. Taken together the group of stone images from Mohenjodaro has a style of its own as shown by the receding forehead, larger face, narrow eyes, not found in contemporary Mesopotamia or in the historical sculpture of India. On the other hand, the sturdy neck, inlaid eyes and the shaven upper lip have similarity with figures in Mesopotamia.

In contrast to the formal and stiff style of the above, two pieces from Harappa found in by Vats and Sahni are of such outstanding æsthetic value and anatomical perfection that they have caused as much gladdening of heart amongst true art-lovers as flutter amongst stolid archæologists, who look upon them with an uneasy eye against all evidence furnished by the find-spot, material, technique and unique style. The one, a male torso (3·75″) of red coloured fine lime-stone (*Fig. 20*), and the other, a female dancer (3·9″) of dark lime-stone having soft effiminate charm show a rare sensitiveness and skilful modelling unparallel in the stone art of the ancient world (*Figs. 14 a & b*). The sealed levels in which they were exposed with other associate finds of protohistoric age cancels all doubt about their being exotic, as confirmed by Vats and Marshall. The particular stone of which they are made was being imported in the Indus Valley from an unknown source and used for many other objects found there, but not a single figurine or object of the same material has been found in historical art. The evidence of technique is even more forceful as being in favour of the two statues being indigenous to the Indus Valley, e.g., the holes in the shoulders and neck for attaching moveable arms and head and the use of a tubular drill to make them, not known elsewhere. Their style also is distinctive and incomparable with any other thing that we know either in the East or in the West. This solid evidence about their origin accords well with the fact that the excellence of

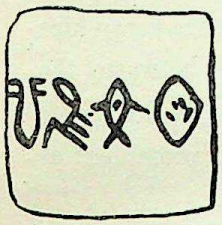


Fig. 13. A Seal

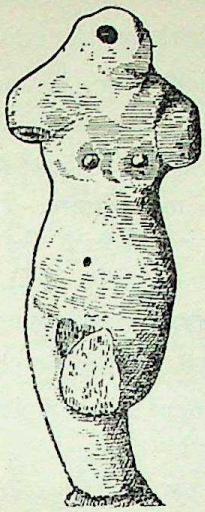


Fig. 14 (a). Torso of a dancer from Harappa

Fig. 15. A Seal

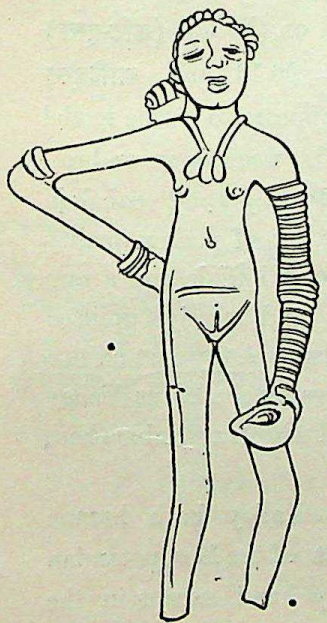


Fig. 17. Dancing girl from Mohenjodaro

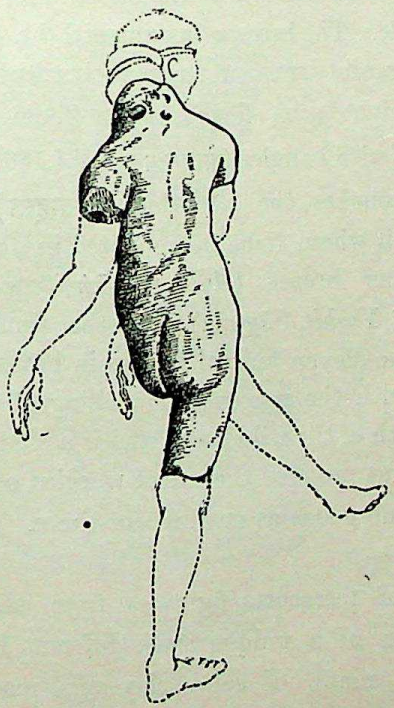


Fig. 14 (b) Reconstruction of Fig. (14) a according to Marshall

Fig. 18. Mother Goddess Mohenjodaro

carving observed in these two figurines was well within the competence of the master engravers who have created wonderful figures of bulls on the steatite seals.

The male torso, with its developed muscles and stout limbs depicted in a frontal position is explicit in expression. But the figure of the dancer standing on the right leg with the left one thrown towards the proper right in a delicate pose presents some difficulty of identification as to its sex. It is taken as a male figure. But, as Marshall noticed its 'soft and effeminate' built, no one can fail to be impressed with the rythmic animation in the various limbs and pose as peculiar to a female body(*Fig. 14 b*). This is writ large in the broad hips (पृथुश्रोणि)), contracted waist (मध्ये संग्राह्या) and somewhat narrower region between the shoulders (विमृष्टान्तरांसा; these epithets are applied to the beauty of a woman, Ś'B.1.2.5.16, 3.5.1.11). The breasts with nipples attached in the holes are certainly not so prominent as in the clay figurines but compare favourably with those of the girl in bronze.

Copper was the chief metal with the Indus Valley people and by mixing tin they prepared an alloy of bronze for making some important articles. The process of casting bronze by the *cire perdue* process, viz., making a model of wax and using it as the core inside a clay mould and then pouring molten metal for casting the desired figure of solid metal. This technique has been followed throughout the long period of the history of Indian bronzes, and its earliest specimens are works of decided merit not only for a full mastery of the technique but also for their realistic sytle. The bronze dancing girl (ht. 4.5″) is a matter of fact example in which the rather longish legs and arms and the slightly tilted head bespeak the rhythm of her movements (*Fig. 17*). The right arm, flexed at the elbow, is placed on the hip (कटि-हस्त) and the left, profusely loaded with bangles (खादय:; RV.I.166.9, VII. 56.13 and खादिहस्त V. 58.2) is suspended and touches the left thigh (लताहस्त). She appears to be the model of *Nṛitū*, a female dancer with whom Ushā is compared in the Ṛigveda, wearing an embroidered garment and opening her breasts (*Adhi peshāṁsi vapate Nṛitūr-ivā-porṇute vakshaḥ*, RV. I.92.4; *Nṛitū=Nṛityantī Yoshit*, Sāyaṇa). Another similar figure but of poorer quality was also found. Amongst the eleven animal figures in bronze those of a buffalo and a ram are noteworthy, the former with the muscular modelling of the body and massive uplifted head shows the reserve strength of the wild beast and is a study in realism. A toy cart on two solid wheels with a driver gives proof of the use of wheeled conveyances by the Indus Valley people for transport of men and goods as until recent times. The solid wheels resemble those in use in Sind even today.

The vast number of terracotta figurines from the Indus Valley both human (*Figs. 18, 19*) and animal are of a unique style different from that of the Mesopotamian figures. They are generally made of solid clay and modelled by hand except in the case of human masks and a few hollow animal figurine, for which moulds were used. The figurines were baked to a light red colour and were afterwards painted red. Some of the animal figurine show ventholes for escape of air or ashes of the burnt core.

Fig. 19.
Mother Goddess
from Harappa

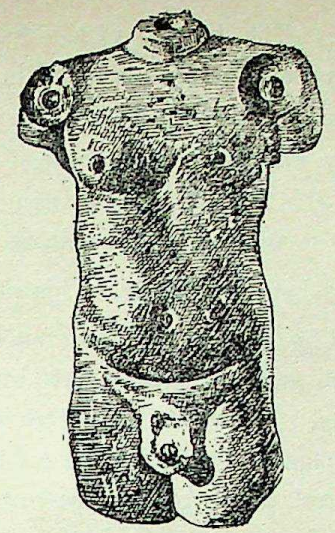


Fig. 20. Male torso
from Harappa

Fig. 21. Divine
Image-Mohenjodaro

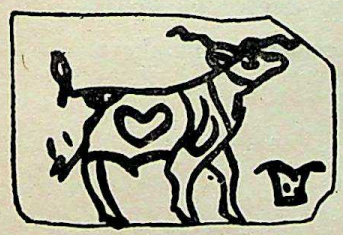


Fig. 22. A Seal

Fig. 23. Black painted red
vase-Harappa

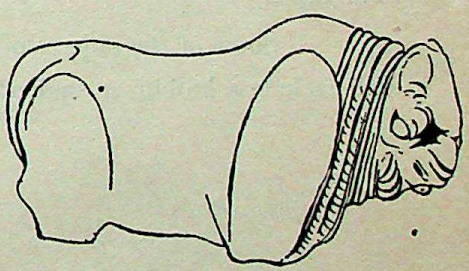


Fig. 24. Terracotta Bull Mohenjodaro

Stylistically the figurines are realistic and in the case of a moulded bull the general effect is very pleasing (*Fig. 24*). The human masks having horns seem to have been used as apropiatic figures. The epithet *Vishāṇin* is found in the Ṛigveda (VII.18.7) as the name of one of the five tribes who massed to battle against the forces of the Aryan king Tṛitsu. The other names of this confederacy, viz., Bhalanas (people of the Bolan), Śivas (same as the Sibis), Pakthas (Pathans) point to the fact that the Vishāṇinas also belonged to the same region. The discovery of over 1000 steatite seals with unicorn motif points to the importance of the horn symbol in the religious belief of the Indus people.

A large number of animal figurines in clay were found used as toys for children and showing in order of popularity such animals as the short-horned bull, humped or Brāhmnī bull, ram or goat, rhinoceros and dog. The wide choice of toy animals, rodents, birds, reptiles etc. also includes monkey, pig, hare, elephant, tiger, buffalo, mongoose, snake, armadillo, turtle, dove, domestic fowl, peacock, squirrel, goose, pigeon, sparrow, parrot, owl, grasshopper etc. This variety is similar to the pottery figurines of animals of the historical period. It was found that a good number of animal figurines were hollow inside being made on a core of some combustible material.

A remarkable technique was developed in the making of faience paste used for fine moulded objects as toy figurines, ornaments like bracelets, studs, beads, amulets, buttons, finger-rings, and miniature pottery (*Fig. 23*), balls and marbles, gamesmen, inlay pieces, seals (*Figs. 13, 15, 22*), plaques, spindle whorls, weights etc. of extremely fine quality. Faience was prepared from powdered quartz, or sometimes steatite also, with a binding material and after being moulded to the desired form was coated with a glaze. The use of faience was known in Egypt prior to the Indus Valley and possibly the technique was borrowed from there.

Some of the objects of faience (कांचली मिट्टी) showing a high degree of artistic skill include a knibbling squirrel, a crouching ram and a figurine of coalescing monkeys.

III

SOME EARLY SYMBOLS

5. SYMBOLIC IMAGES AND PAINTINGS

Indian ritual is for the most part symbolical. The idea behind symbolism is that the external form is useful for its inner meaning. The form is only apparent, the meaning conveyed by it is real. For example, in every pūjā, a jar full of water (*Pūrṇa Ghaṭa or Maṅgala Kalaśa*) is sanctified for worship in the very beginning. The idea is not the adoration of the earthen pot, but the pot full of holy water is the symbol of the human body on the one hand and of the cosmos on the other. Both *piṇḍa* and *Brahmāṇḍa*, namely the individual and the universal are identified and the main object of worship is to understand the close correspondence between the two. The water contained in the pot is the symbol of the life-sap. This is only one instance. It can be said with clear understanding that the mass of religious ritual in Hinduism is a vast body of symbolism.

The same is true with reference to Indian art, specially images in sculpture and painting. Here we have to deal mostly with images of gods and goddesses, that were either carved in stone or wood, or moulded in clay, or represented in painting ; whatever be the medium, the meaning behind these images was one and the same. To understand this meaning one should make himself familiar with the language of symbolism. In Indian art this language is quite articulate and eloquent, in a series of formulas known as *dhyāna-mantras* of the respective deities.

The basic point of view is that the cosmos or creation is an emanation from the Supreme Being, who is called Prajāpati or the Creator. The several powers of the Creator are the *devatās*. What is created is infinite nature comprising the five elements of gross matter. Thus there are basically two entities, namely the *Devas* and the *Bhūtas*, or what in modern terms may be equated as Energy and Matter. All external forms are material. They have no substance in themselves. They are merely the vehicles of the manifest glory of the *Devas*. The *Devas* are unmanifest, while matter or creation is manifest. Each form is a symbol of the formless. Cosmos is an aggregation of forms. But its source is the Supreme Unmanifest Creator. He is both formless (*Arūpa*), and Omniform (*Viśvarūpa*).

Creation is the result of the One becoming the Many. This multiplicity is basically expressed as a Triad, which has many forms. In philosophy it is known as the three guṇas, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas ; in religious worship it takes the form of three gods, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva. The basis of Trinity is metaphysical. Its antiquity is rooted in the Vedas and elaborated in the Purāṇas. In iconography Brahmā is shown as seated on a *haṁsa* with a *kamaṇḍalu* in his hand. He has a lotus under him floating in a lake. The lotus is the symol of creation and of life. The *haṁsa* is the symbol of mind or the Ego which is at the root of individual manifestation. The water in the *kamaṇḍalu* represents unformed matter. The

four faces of this deity are the symobls of the four arms of the *Svastika*, which is the basic design of the universe. Brahmā is the God of all knowledge, symbolised as the four Vedas.

Vishṇu is the second deity of the triad. He is the preserver. His vehicle is Garuḍa, which symbolises the sun or time. Vishṇu's *Chakra* is also the revolving wheel of time. It is also the *Brahmāṇḍa-Chakra*, that is the Cosmos imagined as a circle, which is infinite but bounded. Vishṇu is known for his three steps which signify motion. The Serpent on which Vishṇu sleeps is named Ananta or the Infinite which is the symbol of the Absolute. Vishṇu stands for the imminent form and the cosmic serpent Śesha stands for the transcendent absolute or the unmanifest sub-stratum. The four arms of Vishṇu are symbols of the *Svastika*, i.e. the fourfold pattern of Creation.

The images of Śiva are two fold, namely in human form and in Liṅga form. The Liṅga form is literally the symbolical form, namely the life principle which has not become manifest in body. It is the unmanifest or the *Avyakta* principle not yet materialised. It is the symbol of fire or the creative principle or the primeval seed which is the source of world progenition. The opposite principle of Śiva is Pārvatī; whereas Śiva is fiery energy, Pārvatī is Soma. They both typify the father principle and the mother principle respectively. They are the cosmic parents. The male and the female conjointly become the Ardhanārīśvara. Both are essential for creation of new life, which is symbolised as their son, Kumāra or Skanda. Śiva is also shown with five heads which are the symbols of the five gross elements of matter. The moon on his head is the symbol of mind and of immortality. The snakes typify the opposite principle of death or poison or darkness or *asura*. The bull of Śiva is the symbol of Kāma or passion whom the great God brought under his control by the power of *tapas* and *samādhi*. The images of these deities are manifold but all of them illustrate the language of symbolism as adopted for the sake of religious worship.

6. PŪRṆA-KUMBHA OR THE FULL VASE

The *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* or the Full Vase is one of the most beautiful decorative symbols of early Indian art. It is the emblem *par excellence* of fullness, and prosperity, of life endowed with all its gifts, moral, material and spiritual. The full blooming, overflowing contents of life are comparable to the plants and foliage luxuriating from the mouth of a jar filled with the life-giving fluid. The potent contents of life must seek their inevitable expression. Just as from a well-planted seed springs into manifest form the plant with its beautiful leaves and charming flowers, so does human life manifest itself as a visible symbol of the most mysterious and attractive force enshrined in Nature. In one word it is the *Pūrṇam* or the *Plenum* that is life; the rest is its negation. Fullness that is within and that is without, Fullness that is in the cause and that is in the effect—it is this the most loving and assuring thing that we know of on this side of Life. The Upanishads declare the truth as follows—

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् । पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ॥

'That is full. This is full. From the full proceeds the full'.

That (*adaḥ*) and This (*idam*) are like two eternal poles of the law of Life—its cathode and anode which govern this mysterious chemistry. *Plenum* or fullness is the great secret of its eternal pulsation. Fullness is felt by the presence of the quickening force that bursts forth into beauty; its absence or diminution on the other hand marks the negation of beauty, art and life.

The Ṛigveda, the oldest document of the Aryan life concepts, bears testimony to the conception of the Pūrṇa-Kalaśa. We read there—'Overflowing is the Vase of the Yajamāna. Glory to him. As a bounteous pourer have I filled up the cup for you all to drink[1]'.

Pūrṇa-Kalaśa (*Figs. 25-30*) is made here the emblem of overflowing divine bounty held at the disposal of the Yajamāna and symbolising an alround plenitude of possessions. The fluid contents flow from the pitcher to the chalice for the sake of human satisfaction.

There are many other references to Kalaśa in the Ṛigveda occurring in connection with the pressing of Soma and its storage in the Jar which is called Somadhāna, Soma-receptacle (VI, 69, 6; IX, 97, 33).

The Kalaśa is made of gold, filled with milk (IV, 32, 9), and overflowing (*āpipyāna*, आपिप्यान) with the shining liquid (IV, 27, 5). A definite suggestion is made that the Soma while entering the Jar induces all kinds of beauty to reside in it—विश्वा श्रियः[2]

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[1] आपूर्णो अस्य कलशः स्वाहा । सिक्तेव कोशं सिसिचे पिबध्यै । *Ṛig. III, 32, 15.*

[2] *Ṛig. IX, 62, 19.*

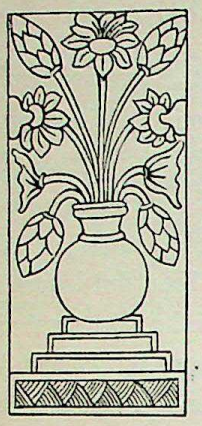

Fig. 25. Sarnath

Fig. 26. Kapiśā

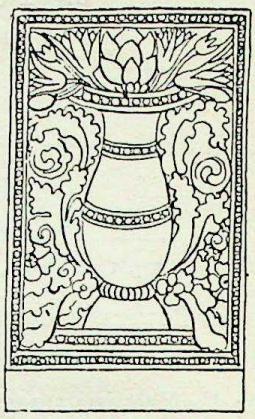

Fig. 27. Amaravati

PŪRṆA-KUMBHAS

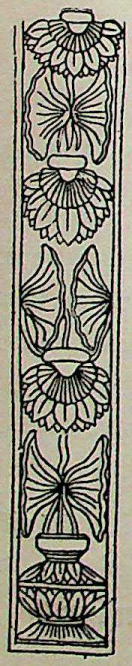

Fig. 28. Sanchi

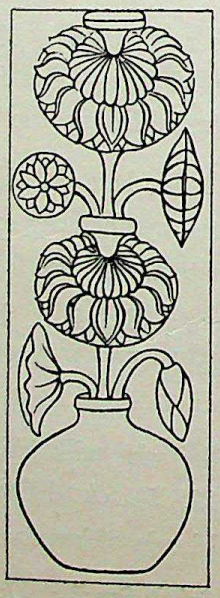

Fig. 29. Sanchi

Fig. 30. Amaravati

Soma and Beauty (*Śrī*) constitute a pair. Soma stands in relation to Śrī as the male principle to the female. Where there is Soma, the Life-elixir, beauty essentially lives with it. Besides beauty, the Full Vase is also invoked as the witness of manifold auspicious enjoyments and blessings[1].

Hence it is that the *Pūrṇa-Kalaśa* is also called the *Bhadra Ghaṭa*, the Auspicious Vase. In the Atharvaveda another variation of the name is found, and that is *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* (III, 12, 8). The imagery of the *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* enlivening and vegetating in manifold forms finds appropriate expression—

'The *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* is the firm substratum of Time. We behold it manifesting in various forms'[2]. This is a very significant passage. The endless stream of time, unfailing and inexhaustible winding out before us from eternity—what is the source of its unfathomable fullness ?

The seer explains that an overflowing *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* exists in the womb of Time and presides over the endless manifestations of the eternal and powerful time process. The latter quality is symbolized by the significant Vedic word '*Bahudhā*'. That which is in the womb of the Vase is one, invisible and indivisible. When it becomes 'many' (*bahudhā*), it manifests outside and appears at its mouth. The branches and leaves on the top of the Full Vase convey beautifully the diversified urge of the creative process. They represent its infinite fullness.

According to the divine law as explained in the Śatapatha, the All and the Full are verily one[3]. Again, what is all or the whole is also full[4] and conversely, that which is full is necessarily universal or cosmic[5].

The *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* is thus a charming symbol of double *entendre*, signifying the one becoming the many, and the created many attuned to the universal whole. The manifestation of the life-force from the womb is the most subtle and mysterious thing that we know of in the whole panorama of our existence. Its creation is a sacred and sublime act, an event fit for universal rejoicing. The gods seem to sing with joy when life recreates life. This process is ceaseless like the ever-unfolding process of time. What can be the secret of its inexhaustible power ? The poet conceives that there is the *Kumbha* or the Full Vase enshrined in the innermost secret of the womb which contains the infant, and this vase is said to be the

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1 एतानि भद्रा कलश क्रियाम । —*Ṛig, X, 32, 9*

2 पूर्णः कुम्भोऽधिकाल आहितस्तं वै पश्यामो बहुधा नु सन्तम् । —*Atharva, XIX, 53, 3*

3 सर्वं वै पूर्णम् —*Śat., IV, 2, 2, 2; V 2, 3,* 1.

4 सर्वं वै तत् यत् पूर्णम् —*Śat., IV, 2, 3, 2,*

5 सर्वमेतत् यत् पूर्णम्, —*Śat., IX, 2, 3, 43.*

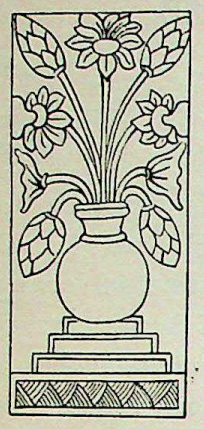


Fig. 25. Sarnath

Fig. 26. Kapiśā

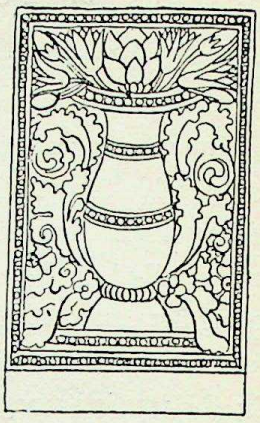


Fig. 27. Amaravati

PŪRṆA-KUMBHAS

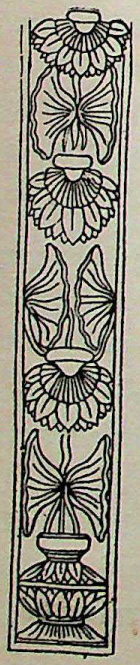
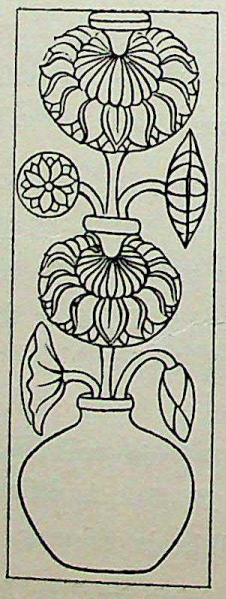


Fig. 28. Sanchi



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[3] सर्वं वै पूर्णम् —*Śat., IV, 2, 2, 2; V 2, 3,* 1.

[4] सर्वं वै तत् यत् पूर्णम् —*Śat., IV, 2, 3, 2,*

[5] सर्वमेतत् यत् पूर्णम्, —*Śat., IX, 2, 3, 43.*

real progenitor by the force of its inherent mysterious powers[1]. In this sense the Full Vase would be considered a representative symbol of the hidden vital force, and its fluid contents signify life itself. The infant that grows out of the womb and attains to full human majesty in due course epitomizes the virtues of the symbolical Full Vase. He is Pūrṇa, full and overflowing with prosperity and blessings (*Bhūti and Āśis*) and besides—

'Enjoyments, pleasures and delights gladness and rapturous ecstasies.

Laughter and merriment, dance and play have made body their home[2].'

Such is the spirit of joy and fulness in the Full Vase.

The specific association of the *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* with dwellings and homes which it was used to adorn is explicitly stated in the description of the completion ceremony of a new house in the Atharvaveda[2] :—

'O fair damsel, bring hither to us the *Pūrṇa-Kumbha*, filled with streams of clarified butter, blent with nectar. Bedew these drinkers with a draught of Amṛita. May the reward of our pious works (*iṣhṭā-pūrta*) guard this dwelling'.[3]

Here we are brought nearer to thar charming conception which is familiar from the Buddhist literature, *viz.*, *Puṇṇaghaṭa paṭimaṇḍita ghara*, (पुण्णघट-पटिमंडित घर), a house embellished with a Full Vase (*Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā, I, 147*).

The representations of this delightful symbol occurs in art and sculpture and continue from the Śuṅga to the medieval period. They are seen in a pleasing variety of forms (*Figs.* 25-30).

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[1] कुम्भो वनिष्ठुर्जनिता शचीभि-
र्यस्मिन्नग्रे योन्यां गर्भोऽअन्तः। —*Yajus, XIX. 87.*

[2] आनन्दा मोदाः प्रमुदोऽभीमोदमुदश्च ये।
हसो नरिष्टा नृत्तानि शरीरमनु प्राविशन्॥ —*Atharva, XI. 8. 24.*

[3] पूर्णं नारि प्रभर कुम्भमेतं घृतस्य धाराममृतेन संभृताम्।
इमान् पातृनममृतेनासमङ्ग्धीष्टापूर्तमभि रक्षात्येनाम्॥ —*Atharva, III, 12, 8.*

7. KALPAVṚIKSHA

THE WISH FULFILLING TREE

Indian art conveys its meaning in a distinct symbol language. The lotus, the full vase (*Pūrṇa-ghaṭa*), the *Svastika*, the wheel (*Chakra*), the three jewels (*Triratna*), and the *Kalpa-vṛiksha*, part as it were of an alphabet, are being used with perfect mastery as elements of decoration ; they have not only invested art, Buddhist and Brāhmanic, with endless beauty but also show it as a vehicle of ideas. These symbols formed an integral part of Indian thought for ages serving like pegs for religious and metaphysical ideas. Their meaning was ingrained in the consciousness of the people, and the art-connoisseur carried within him a subconscious reaction to these symbol forms which intensified his appreciation of an art which was rich both in external as well as inner meaning.

The Lotus has been extolled as the prime symbol of creation, the seat and substratum of universal creative force which springs from the navel or centre of the primeval Creator. Simplified to a concise Sūtra of art, it is expressed as *Brahmā*, the genius of creation, seated on a full-blown lotus with a long stalk springing from the navel of Vishṇu. That the elaborate Paurāṇic cosmogony could be treated with such mastery of form gives a vantage-ground to the artist. As the lotus floats above water, so the created cosmos emerged to the surface of the primeval deep or 'chaos', which originally was the confused mass out of which the order of the universe was evolved. The Greek word chaos is the same as Vedic 'Kha'. 'Kham' represented the great chasm or vacuum out of which was born the 'Kam', or the Plenum. 'Kha' is the navel from which the cosmic lotus takes its birth. Again 'Kha' represents the centre of the Wheel of which the spokes and the peripheral frame mark the Universe.

The symbols of the lotus and the *Chakra* are primarily Vedic symbols. And so is the full vase or the *Pūrṇa-Ghaṭa* in which, as the seer of the Atharva Veda sings, the gods filled in one place immortality and life, prosperity and food, and many a good thing besides. Their opposites, the principles of non-life and non-riches, also lurk, with divine sufferance, in some unperceived corner of this *Pūrṇa-Kumbha*. But what is essential and auspicious for life is the brimming and overflowing aspect of the *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* symbolising the growth and creative fertility in every phase of man's being on this earth. The *Pūrṇa-Kumbha* is verily the human body or Man himself containing within him the fullest range of divine blessings and the choicest gifts to which the soul aspires. With such a perfect symbol to express the idea of fulness and prosperity the Indian artist felt enraptured, and with his genius for the beautiful he portrayed that idea in the form of a full vase overladen with foliage and adorned with girdles of flowery garlands on the neck, shoulder and base. A comprehensive study of the *Pūrṇa-Ghaṭa* and its variations as found in Indian art would be interesting. The same is the case with other symbols

which enriched art as elements of decoration and at the same time gave to it deeper philosophic meaning. Not only trees and creepers but also animals and birds of various forms, e.g., *Siṁha*, *Vṛisha*, *Haṁsa* and *Suparṇa*, lion ,bull, goose and 'bird', constantly appear in Indian art contributing to its richness, gaiety and freshness as it would be from al iving contact with nature.

The symbol of the *Kalpa-vṛiksha* has been popular both as regards its representation in sculpture and painting and description in ancient poetry and literature. It is variously known as *Kalpataru*, *Kalpadruma*, *Devataru*, etc., and from the point of view of art the *Kalpavallī* and the *Kalpalatā* are but extensions of the same motif treated with luxuriance. The central idea of the *Kalpa-vṛiksha* is that it is the Wishing Tree which fulfils all desires. It was produced as one of the fourteen gems at the time of the gigantic churning of the ocean by the Devas and the Asuras. The auspicious conch and the auspicious cow—*Pāñchajanya* and *Kamādhenu*—were also produced along with the Wishing Tree and they too went to the gods. They are kindred symbols with the *Kalpa-vṛiksha* as bestowing fruition of human desires, and have been employed in Indian art and poetry with remarkable success. The phrase '*Kāmadughā*' is frequent in the Vedas and is applied variously to speech (*Vāk*), Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, Aditi, the mother of the gods, and Pṛithivī, the Great Mother personified (*Mahī-mātā*). The Wishing Tree also is called Kāmadugha as it grants all desires and fulfils all wishes. So long as a man is under its shade, whatever he conceives he realizes. Wealth, women and all kinds of enjoyments issue forth from its fructifying boughs.

The Mind is the *Kalpa-vṛiksha* or the Wishing Tree which gives us every thing for the mere thought of it. In a very real sense the Mind is the most powerful creator, the perennial source of all our enjoyments, and the inexhaustible fountain from which pleasure (*rasa*) constantly oozes out. Thought (*saṅkalpa*) is the nature and power of the Mind which makes life teem with innumerable blessings. The artists made full use of a rich conception like this, and employed the *Kalpa-vṛiksha* as one of the symbols which adorned art both in respect of beauty of form and depth of meaning.

At Bharhut bounteous curves of lotus creepers run in continuous bands, each bough or bud of which carries beautiful ornaments, earrings, 'kuṇḍalas' for the ears of the Prākāra-vapra design,[1] necklaces set with pearls and beads, armlets and anklets and spiral rings of various designs, delicate scarfs with flower-patterns woven in their texture, and 'sāris' with '*paṭlī*' ends of '*gomūtrikā*' designs[2]. The *Kalpalatā* decoration producing such ornaments is a conspicuous feature of early Indian art and it is very often repeated leaving a pleasant effect on the mind.

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[1] For the meaning of the Prākāra-vapra design earrings, see ABORI, XXXIII, p.p. 19-22.

[2] Pāṇini in the Gaṇasūtra '*gomūtra āchchhādane*'; on Sūtra V. 4. 3. refers to a cloth called '*gomūtrikā*' which seems to be the 'sāri' worn by men and women in the reliefs at Bharhut and Sanchi; it seems to have derived its name from the particular '*gomūtra*' form of its front pendant portion.

The motif developed and continued later in the art of the Gupta period and even afterwards. The deep-cut foliage decorations and creepers with intertwining tendrils are a familiar feature of Gupta art, and in some of them objects of enjoyment are carved as the products of the Wishing Tree. On a beautiful pillar from Gadhwa a creeper with youthful maidens springing from its branches has entwining leaves and offshoots (*Kāmalatā*). The pillar is illustrated by Cunningham (ASR. Vol. X. Pl. VI and on p. 7)[1].

कामलता

Recently, Sivaramamurti drew attention to the *Kalpa-vṛiksha- Kalpa-vallī* motif explaining it in the light of a few literary references from Kālidāsa[2]. The conception of an idyllic land or clime in which all kinds of human enjoyments are available to man as in a garden of paradise, is of old standing in Indian literature. We read in the story of the Mahāvāṇija Jātaka (No. 493) that a group of merchants who had set out in search of a treasure come to a mighty banyan tree with cool and pleasant shade. From its eastward branch pure and clear water trickled for them ; they washed and drank their fill. One of the branches on the south gave them all things to eat :

'Both rice and meat out in a stream it brings,
Thick prorridge ginger lentle soup and many other things',
From the western branch—
'Outcame a bevy of fair girls all pranked in brave array,
And O the robes of many hues, jewels, and rings in plenty!
Each merchant had a pretty maid, each of the five and twenty'.
From the northern branch likewise—
'.....outcame a stream of gold,
Silver in handfuls, precious rings and jewels manifold.
And robes of fine Benares cloth and blankets thick and thin,
The merchants then to roll them up in bundles did begin'.

This Tree which produced water streams, food, pretty maids and good things is the ideal *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* so often extolled in literature. The following Pāli gāthā sums up the virtues of this auspicious tree—

वारिदा पुरिमा साखा अन्नपानञ्च दक्खिणा ।
नारिदा पच्छिमा साखा सब्बकामे च उत्तरा ॥ (Fausboell. Jāt. IV. 352)

The idea that the tree deity gave the merchants water to drink, food to eat, beds to lie on, maidens to attend them and all treasures, has an irresistible appeal of which both the poets and the artists took full advantage to embellish their works. In the epic literature and in the Purāṇas the conception

[1] Its present whereabouts are unknown, but I am indebted to Mr. A. G. Shirreff, I.C.S., for an old outline drawing of it which is reproduced here with his kind permission.

[2] Journal of Oriental Research, Vol. XIV, Pt. III, pp. 180-182.

of the Wishing Tree producing all desires is extended to the idyllic land of Uttarakuru where Elysian conditions prevail, leading to an exceedingly delightful life of the inmates.

In the Rāmāyaṇa, Sugrīva directs the monkey chiefs to go in quest of Sītā in the northern direction. There, at the end of the earth they would find the land of the Uttarakurus. "Flowers of gold as resplendent as fire are seen there in eternal bloom imbued with divine fragrance. The beautiful trees produce garments of various kinds and costly gems which are pleasant for men and women to use in all seasons ; beds with beautiful coverlets and pleasing garlands ; costly drinks and food of many descriptions ; and to crown this all, maidens endowed with beauty, virtue and youth".[1]

In the Mahābhārata, the Elysian land of Uttarakuru with all kinds of plenty in fruits and flowers and with trees producing all objects of desire (*sarvakāmaphalā Vṛikshāḥ*) is conceived in the northern direction adjacent to Meru. There, as fruits from trees, are produced : garments, ornaments and youthful pairs of men and wome (*mithunāni*) who draw sustenance from the nectar-like milk of the milky trees and are perfectly matched to each other in beauty, dress and appearance. The human beings in that region are happy and contented like gods being free from all sorrows and ailments, and they do not suffer the pangs of separation.[2]

It appears that this description of Uttarakuru was an inherent part of the Bhuvanakośa as we find it repeated in a similar context in the Vāyupurāṇa (Chap. 45 verses 11-50). The description in the Purāṇa, besides recording what the Epic contains is much more elaborate, and we find there reference to streams of '*madhu*' and '*maireya*', of butter and curds, to mountains of delicious food, to groves furnished with beds, seats, cosmetics, garlands, etc. and to a great many other items of pleasure. In that region there is sweet music of every description rising from lute, flute and tabors, and hundreds andt housands of *Kalpa-Vṛikshas* produce fine and beautiful garments agreeable to wear.

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[1] जातरूपमयैश्चापि हुताशनसमप्रभः । नित्यपुष्पफलास्तत्र नगाः पत्ररथाकुलाः ॥४३॥
दिव्यगन्धरसस्पर्शाः सर्वान् कामान् स्रवन्ति च । नानाकाराणि वासांसि फलन्त्यन्ये नगोत्तमाः ॥४४॥
मुक्तावैदूर्यचित्राणि भूषणानि तथैव च । स्त्रीणां यान्यनुरूपाणि पुरुषाणां तथैव च ॥४५॥
सर्वर्तुसुखसेव्यानि फलन्त्यन्ये नगोत्तमाः । महार्हमणिचित्राणि फलन्त्यन्ये नगोत्तमाः ॥४६॥
शयनानि प्रसूयन्ते चित्रास्तरणवन्ति च । मनःकान्तानि माल्यानि फलन्त्यत्रापरे द्रुमाः ॥४७॥
पानानि च महार्हाणि भक्ष्याणि विविधानि च । स्त्रियश्चैव गुणसम्पन्ना रूपयौवनलक्षिताः ॥४८॥
—*Kishkindhā kāṇda, ch. 43, verses 43-48.*

[2] उत्तराः कुरवो राजन् पुण्याः सिद्धनिषेविताः ॥२॥
तत्र वृक्षा मधुफला नित्यपुष्पफलोपमाः । पुष्पाणि च सुगंधीनि रसवन्ति फलानि च ॥३॥
सर्वकामफलास्तत्र केचिद्वृक्षा जनाधिप । अपरे क्षीरिणो नाम वृक्षास्तत्र नराधिप ॥४॥
ये क्षरन्ति सदा क्षीरं षड्रसं चामृतोपमम् । वस्त्राणि च प्रसूयन्ते फलेष्वाभरणानि च ॥५॥
मिथुनानि च जायन्ते स्त्रियश्चाप्सरसोपमाः । तेषां ते क्षीरिणां क्षीरं पिबन्त्यमृतसन्निभम् ॥८॥
मिथुनं जायते काले समं तच्च प्रवर्धते । तुल्यरूपगुणोपेतं समवेषं तथैव च ॥९॥—*Bhīshmaparvan, 7, 2-11*

A representation of the Uttarakuru land is probably what we find at Sanchi carved on the western face of the western pillar of the south gateway of the Great Stūpa (*Marshall, 'Monuments of Sanchi'*, Vol. I, p. 144 ; Vol. II, Pl. XIXa). In several undulating bands of a lotus creeper (one of which is reproduced here Figure 32) are youthful couples engaged in music and pleasure surrounded by birds and animals and seated under the shades of boughs overladen with costly ornaments of many kinds.

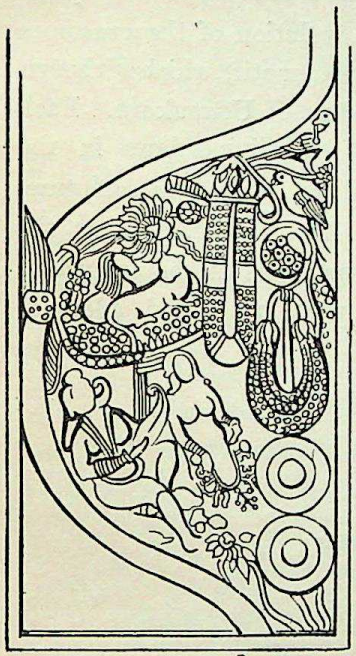

Fig. 32. Youthful couples engaged in Music. (Sanchi)

This representation is so close to the literary tradition given in the Epics that it appears to suggest a conscious treatment by the artist of a theme which literary tradition had made popular. The sculptors at Sanchi and Bharhut (*p. 13. Figs. 4 : a, b, c & d,*) have carved time and again the lotus creepers as producing ornaments (*muktāvaidūryachitrāṇi bhūṣhaṇāni*). Kālidāsa in the *Kumārasambhava*, VIII. 68, refers to necklaces (*hārayasṭi*) hanging from the top of *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* trees. In the *Meghadūta* he mentions the *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* as the one complete source of all objects of adornment and toilet used by the women in Alakā, for example, beautiful fabrics, wine causing love glances in the eyes, flowers and tender leaves, a variety of ornaments and lac dye for painting the feet are the *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* products used for female beauty make-up (*abalā-maṇḍana*).[1]

Again the poet refers to the *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* '*madhu*' named '*anaṅgadīpaka*' (also called '*ratiphala*' in *Meghadūta* II, 3) which was served in cups of scarlet coloured gems ('*lohitārka-maṇi-bhājana.*' Kumāra 8. 75). The conception of fine garments produced from the *Kalpataru* is found not only in Kālisa ('*Kalpataru-lambi aṁśuaka* Kumār. 8.71), but also in Bāṇabhaṭṭa who refers several times to the '*Kalpadruma dukūla*' or the '*Kalpalatā dukūla*' which was diaphanous and transparent like the slough of a snake and so light as to be tossed about even by the air of human breath (धौते निश्वासहार्ये निर्मोकशुचिनी कल्पलतादुकूले, *Kādambarī* text, ed. Vaidya, p. 201, 206).[2]

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[1] वासश्चित्रं मधुनयनयोर्बिभ्रमादेशदक्षं, पुष्पोद्भेदं सह किसलयैर्भूषणानां विकल्पान् ।
लाक्षारागं चरणकमलन्यासयोग्यं च यस्यामेकः सूते सकलमबलामंडनं कल्पवृक्षः ॥
—*Megha. II. 11.*

[2] From the above literary tradition we find that the *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* was considered as the source of the following objects of decoration and enjoyment :
Ornaments : 'hārayashṭi', 'ābharaṇa', bhūshaṇa-vikalpa.
Garments : 'kalpatarulambi aṁśuka' (*Kumār.* 8, 71) ; 'chitravāsas' (Megh. II. 11) ; 'maṅgalya

With respect to the auspicious symbol the basic point of view was that each one of them represents the truth and power of the creative force that is in nature. For example, a single lotus flower in full bloom of its beauty is not an isolated phenomenon which depends on chance but it is the fruit of Universal system in which the minutest part is related to the whole and depends essentially for its full manifestation on the glory of the law that exists everywhere and at all times. Similarly a conch depicted as a symbol points to the whole background of Neture's laws which are operative in the ocean and the birth of aquatic life in it and the evolution of the crustacea in its waters. The same is true of a *Kalpa-Vṛiksha* or a *Mithuna* motif, which although singly represented, stand as dominant symbols of the whole idea of Uttarakuru. Each one of them is like a sampling of the auspicious substratum of the divine laws in the universe. Even one symbol depicted in painting or on the wall or in relief in sculpture, terracotta or stucco was considered apotropaic and auspicious like the presence or the divine. It is from this point of view that the many representations of the auspicious objects (*Maṅgala-dravya*) in stone sculpture or in toy figurines were loved and adorned, and were adopted as decorative motifs,

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kshauma' (Śak. IV), 'Kāsika' cloth and blankets of Uḍḍiyāna or Gandhāra country, known as Pāṇḍukambala in the Jātakas and in Pāṇini.

Cosmetics for the body and feet: 'lakshārāga', 'vichchhitti', etc.

Wine and drinks: 'madhu' (Megha. II, 11); 'anaṅgadīpaka'; (*Kumāra.* VIII. 75) and 'ratiphala' (Megha. H. 3); 'mahārhāṇi pānāṇi' (Kishkindhā, 43. 48); 'maireya' (Vāyu, ch. 45).

Beds: 'chitrāstaraṇavanti śayanāni' (Kishkindhā, 43. 47).

Garlands: 'manaḥkānta mālya', (Kish. 43. 47).

Food: 'vividha bhakshya, (Kish. 43-48); 'bahu sālimāṁsodana' (Jāt. IV. 352).

Maidens and Couples: 'guṇasampannā rūpayauvanalakshitā striyaḥ' (Kish. 43. 48); 'nāriyo samlaṇkatā' (Jāt. IV. 352); 'mithunāni' and 'apsarasopamāḥ striyaḥ' (Bhīshma. 7.8)

Water in regaling streams (Mahāvāṇija Jāt. IV. 351).

8. CORNUCOPIA IN LITERATURE

In my Review of Dr. A.S. Altekar's *Catalogue of the Bayānā Hoard* (*J.N.S.I.*, XVII, Pt. I) I had pointed out that cornucopia was a well known motif in Indian literature. Here is that evidence.

1. *Mahābhārata*, Karṇaparva, Poona edn. 6. 37—

तोयपूर्णविषाणैश्च द्वैपखड्गमहर्षभैः । मणिमुक्तामयैश्चान्यैः पुण्यगन्धैस्तथौषधैः ॥

Duryodhana anointed Karṇa to the office of his *Senāpati* (commander-in-chief of the army) by pouring water on his head filled in the *vishāṇa* of elephants, rhinoceroses and bulls, and by scattering pearls and jewels, as also using fragrant lucky herbs. Here the word *vishāṇa* means both a horn, as of a bull and a rhinoceros, and a tusk as of an elephant. Pouring holy water on the head of the person anointed was an ancient custom employed also in the Rājasūya ceremony.

In the above verse the Critical edn. reads *dvīpi*, a panther, which has no horn or tusk and is meaningless in this context, as against *dvipa*, an elephant, of the Vulgate text which gives excellent meaning and undoubtedly was the correct reading. MS. K 3 actually records the variant reading *dvaipa*, which I have adopted here, meaning 'of an elephant'.

2. At the prospect of Rāma's cornation as crown-prince, Sītā expresses her joy as follows :

दीक्षितं व्रतसम्पन्नं वराजिनधरं शुचिम् । कुरंगशृंगपाणिं च पश्यन्ती त्वां भजाम्यहम् ॥

—*Ayodhyā, 16. 23.*

'I shall be by your side at the lucky time when you are consecrated, by taking the holy vow, putting on the excellent deer-skin, and holding the horn of a deer in your hand (*kuraṅga-śṛiṅga-pāṇi*). Here Rāma is expected to hold the *kuraṅga-śṛiṅga* or cornucopia as a lucky attribute in one of his hands.

3. At the time of Sugrīva's coronation, it is stated that he was anointed with water poured from a bull's horn :

आहृत्य च समुद्रेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यो वानरर्षभाः । अपः कनककुम्भेषु निधाय विमलं जलम् ॥
शुभैर्ऋषभशृंगैश्च कलशैश्चैव काञ्चनैः । शास्त्रदृष्टेन विधिना महर्षिविहितेन च ॥

—*Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa Ch. 26, Verses 33-34.*

'The monkey-chiefs collected water from all the seven oceans, having filled golden pitchers with it ; and then with ceremonies prescribed by the texts and as directed by the sages, they bathed him with the auspicious bull-horns and golden jars'.

Here the word is *ṛishabha-śṛiṅga*, the horn of a bull, expressly stated as a lucky object (*śubha*).

4. In the Atharva Veda there is mention of spirits holding horns in their hands preceding on her way the newly wedded bride :

ये पूर्वे वध्वो ३ यन्ति हस्ते शृंगाणि बिभ्रतः ।

This must have been some old custom, probably because even at that ancient period the horn was believed to be a lucky object. Perhaps they filled it with holy water for sprinkling on the way to ward off evil spirits.

I am indebted to Dr. Moti Chandra for the information that in Central Asia they still hang ibex goat horns in the mosques, as remnants of an old custom of using such horns in the temples of Śiva by the primitive tribes there. Probably the people were the Mahāvṛishas (*Atharva, V. 22. 5*) who are stated to be neighbours of the Balhikas and the Mūjavatas.

Pandit Shri Ambika Prasad Upadhyay of the Banaras Hindu University informs me that it is still the custom in Śiva worship to anoint the deity with water poured from horns made of silver. He also mentions that in the Śrāddha ceremony water is offered to the manes with the horn of a rhinoceros.

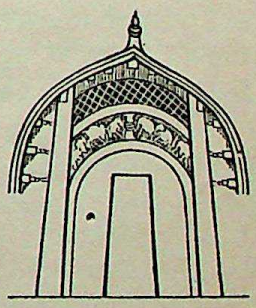
This proves the very ancient belief in India that a horn was an auspicious object from which holy water should be poured as part of the religious rituals. Moreover the *Śṛinga* was considered as a lucky symbol also, for it must have been held as such by *Rāma* in the reference cited above (Ayodhyā 16.23).

Greek *cornu* is the same as Sanskrit *śṛiṅga*. The *Śubha Śṛiṅga* of Indian literature is the same as "*Cornu Copiae* or Cornucopia which was the horn of abundance used as the symbol of plenty. In Greek mythology there are two different tales explaining its origin. One which suckled Zeus ; another to the horn of the river-god Achelous, wrenched off by Herackles" (*Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, edited by F. W. Cornish, London, John Murray, 1898, p. 211). According to the same authority 'The cornucopia constantly appears in coins and works of art, especially of the Roman period, as the symbol of abundance'. I would invite experts kindly to throw further light on the antiquity and religious significance of cornucopia in classical, specially Greek, art and mythology.

Fig. 33 Coin of Huvishka Reverse side; Goddess with cornucopia

Fig. 34 Coin of Hippostratos; city Goddess carrying cornucopia.

Fig. 35 Coin of Huvishka Reverse side; Goddess Ṛitā-devī holding cornucopia.



IV

MAURYAN ART

9. MAURYAN ART

THE MAURYAN PALACE AT PAṬALIPUTRA

Remains of the ancient Indian palaces are few and far between. We have, however, found the material remains of the Mauryan palace at Kumrahar, the site of ancient Pāṭaliputra. There Dr. Spooner made excavations in 1912 and explored the remains of that particular portion of the Mauryan palace which must have been its *Asthāna-Maṇḍapa* or the hall of public audience (also called *Sabhā*). There is a reference of the *Chandragupta-Sabhā* and *Pushyamitra-Sabhā* in Patañjali's *Mahābhāshya*. Now the word Sabhā according to the *sūtra* of Pāṇini denoted both an assembly and assembly-hall (also called *Śālā*). Megasthenes has left behind a factual discription of the assembly-hall of the king Chandra Gupta Maurya.

What we have actually found in the excavations is a magnificent big hall originally supported on 80 pillars distributed in 8 rows of 10 pillars each, with two extra pillars at one end which probably marks the spot of the royal throne. The pillars when complete were 18 feet high but unfortunately all of them, excepting one or two, have been broken into numberless fragments. The one which is well preserved is about 14 ft. high, tapering from the bottom towards the top and without a basement (having a plain shaft). On the bottom are engraved several symbols including crescent and Chaityas and the triangle-headed standard (*Indrayashṭi* or *Dhvaja*). The Crescent or Chaitya or Meru, as it is called, was a typical Mauryan symbol associated with the reign of Chandra Gupta. One of the most distinguishing features of the pillars and their fragments is the bright polish as found on the Aśokan Pillars. It is, therefore, easy to assign them to Mauryan period when this characteristic polish on stone was a regular feature of stone art. It appears that the super-structure was entirely of timber as recorded by the Chinese pilgrim. The whole building probably caught fire at some period of its existence and the result was its utter distruction as evident by the fragments.

We may draw the attention to the *Sabhā* of king Yudhishṭhira as described in the Sabhā Parvan of the *Mahābhārata*. It was built by the architect Maya Asura. That *Sabhā* is described as *Divyā Maṇimayī* and *Prabhayā Sampannā* (polished). The *Sabhā* was rectangular (*Āyatākara*) and spacious (*Vipulā*). The *Mahābhārata* actually mentions that the Sabhā was beautified by creepers of silver and birds of gold. Its total perimeter is mentioned as 8750 yds. The basement of the palace was supported on the head of Atlantes dwarfs (*Kiṅkra*) with pricked ears (*Shanku Karṇa*).

During the Mauryan period two art traditions can be clearly distinguished, namely,

(1) The court art exemplified in the monuments of Aśoka for which the emperor was directly responsible.

(2) The tradition of folk art may be recognised in a group of free-standing statues which have been found at many places in north India, in Bihar and in Orissa. They are mostly figures of Yakshas and Yakshīs and they carry with them a distinct plastic tradition which it is not possible to connect with the finished products of the court art. The material as observed about the images has been found over a very extensive area, thousands of miles in length and breadth, which establishes in an undisputed manner the existence of a far flung style.

The following images are noteworthy :—

(1) Yaksha statue from Parkham village in Mathura district (inscribed).

(2) Yaksha from Baroda village in Mathura district.

(3) Yakshī from Jhing Kā Nagarā in Mathura district.

(4) Yaksha statue found at Noh, village in Bharatpur district.

(5) Yakshī from Besnagar near Bhopal; now presrved in Indian museum.

(6) A Yaksha statue from Pawāyā ancient Padmāvatī, now preserved in the Gwalior Museum (inscribed).

(7) A Yaksha statue from Patna, now preserved in the Indian Museum (inscribed).

(8) Yaksha statue from Patna (inscribed), now preserved in the Indian museum.

(9) A Yakshī statue at Besnagar locally known as the *Telin*.

(10) Trimukha Yaksha statue—trifaced image (*Fig. 41*) found at the site of Rajghat (ancient Banaras), now preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, B.H.U.

(11) A Yaksha image found somewhere in western India and now preserved in National museum.

(12) A Yaksha image found at Bhilsa in bed of the river Betwa (*Vetravatī*).

(13) Several big statutes of Yakshas found recently in excavations at Shishupalgarh in Orissa.

IDENTIFICATION :

The question of the identification of the remarkable group of statutes is of paramount interest for understanding the history of early Indian art both in the Mauryan and Sunga periods. Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy, K. P. Jayswal and Ram Prasad Chanda had worked on this problem and taken part in the controversy regarding the proper identification of these images.

Prof. Jayswal was the first to suggest on the basis of his reading and interpretation of the inscription on the Parkham image, that it represented the statue of King Ajātaśātru of the Śaiśunāga dynasty. He read the name *Kuṇika* which according to the Jaina tradition was a second name of Ajātaśatru. Subsequently when two more Yaksha statues were found at Pāṭaliputra Dr. Jayswal again identified them as the portrait statues of two Nanda emperors, Nanda and his son Mahānandī. Ram Prasad Chanda, however, controverted this view with

cogent arguments developed in his monograph entitled *"Four Yasksha Statues"*. There he has conclusively shown that these statues can not be taken as those of Magadha emperors but represent figures of Yakshas and Yakshīs who were worshipped as part of the folk cults prevalent in ancient India. Dr. Coomarasawamy was at first inclined to agree with Jayswal but later on convinced that these statues represent Yakshas and Yakshīs. He wrote about the Parkham Yaksha (*Fig. 37*), "In view of the recent criticism it is impossible to adhere to Jayswal's view and it is necessary to revert to the opinion that the statue represents Yaksha and must date from the third century B.C."

The question should be decided on the basis of the firm fact. In the first instance, the short inscription on the female statue found at Jhīng Kā Nagarā calls it a Yakhī (in Prakrit, Sans. Yakshī). The statue from Pawāyā (Padmāvatī) (*Figs. 36, 38*) also is mentioned as that of Māṇibhadra Yaksha which was installed by the members of a *Goshṭhī* at Pawāyā. The image found at Noh in Bharatpur district was traditionally known as that of a Jakhaiyā i.e., Yaksha.

Fig. 36. Pawāyā Yaksha (Front View)

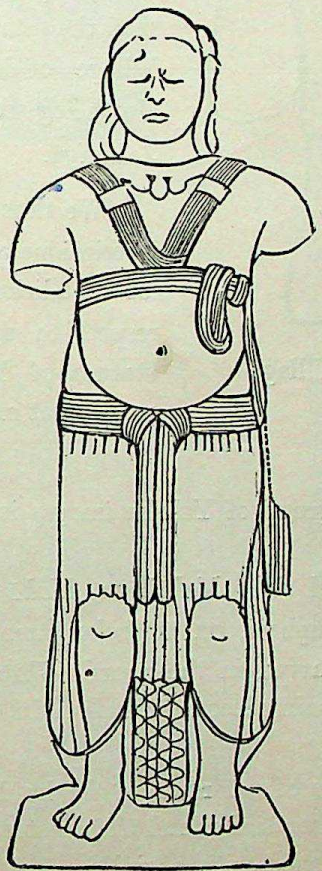


Fig. 37. Parkham Yaksha (Mathura)

Fig. 38. Pawāyā Yaksha (Back View)

As regards the Parkham image which Dr. Jayswal identified with that of Kuṇika, the fact is that the inscription mentions the name of a teacher called Kuṇika, and his pupil *Kuṇikāntevāsī* had established that image. At the beginning can be read three letters निभाद which obviously form part of the name *Manibhāda* (in Prākrit) or Māṇibhadra. So the Parkham image (*Fig. 37*) undoutedly represented the Yaksha Māṇibhadra.

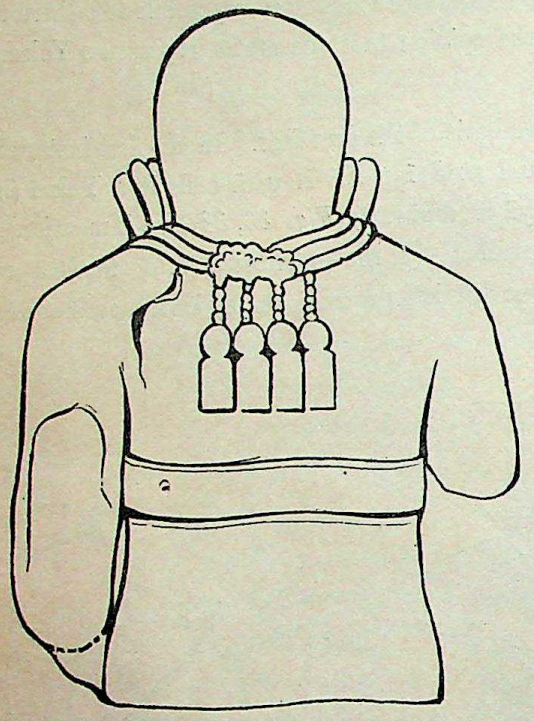


Fig. 39. Yaksha from Baroda Village (Mathura). (Back View)

As regards the two Patna statues (*Fig. 40*) inscription on one of them reads भं गे अ च छ नी विक which may be rendered into Sanskrit as *Bhagāvān Akshaya Nīvika i.e.*, of inexhaustible wealth ; the inscription on the other is सवट नन्दि i.e., in Sanskrit *Sarvatra Nandi*. Both of these are apparently good Yaksha names. Dr. Vogel has (in his *Catalogue of Mathura Museum*) mentioned that the statue obtained in the Ḅaroda Village of Mathura district (*Fig. 39*) was also being worshipped under the name of *Jakhaiyā*.

We thus see on the basis of both the inscriptions on some of the statues and also local traditions obtained on the spot with respect to some of them, these were the statues of Yakshas and Yakshīs whose worship at one time was extremely popular.

STYLE :

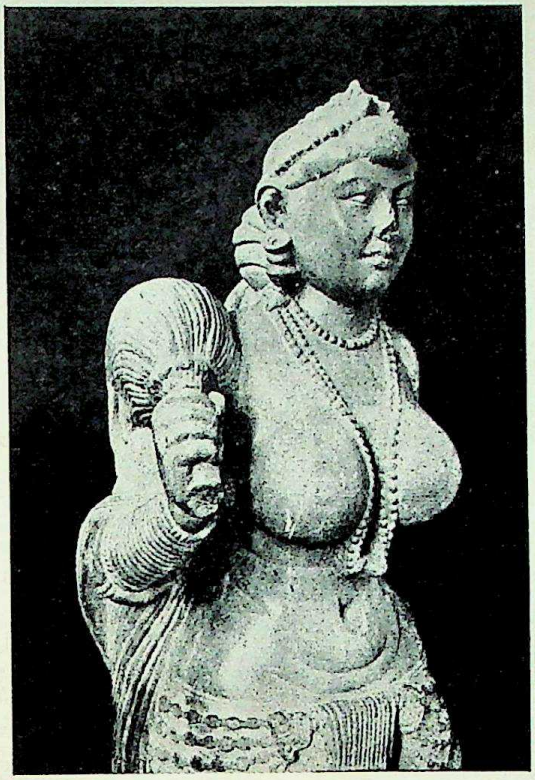
Stylistically the above group of Yaksha images is distinguisded by the following characteristic features :—

(1) They are of colossal size (*Mahākāya, Mahā Pramāṇa*) and massively built with pronounced emphasis on muscular strength.

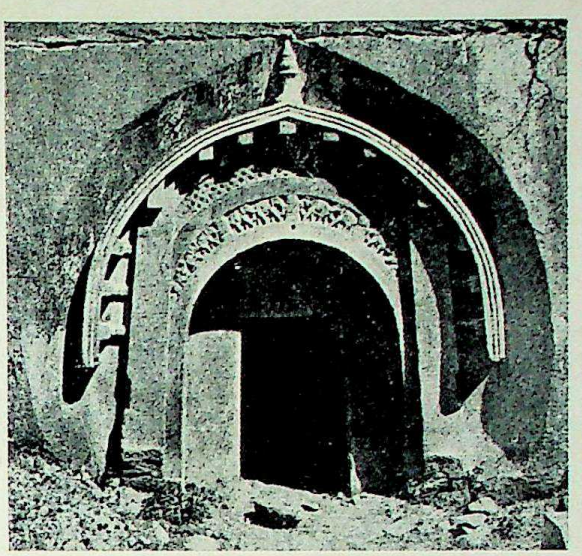
(2) They are usually carved in the round (*Chaturmukhadarśana*) and therefore free-standing ; the main effect is frontal as if they were intended to be seen from the front side only.

(3) The drapery consists of a turban on the head and upper scarf thrown on the shoulders and arms, or tied round the chest and a *dhotī* hanging below up to the ankles and fastened with a girdle.

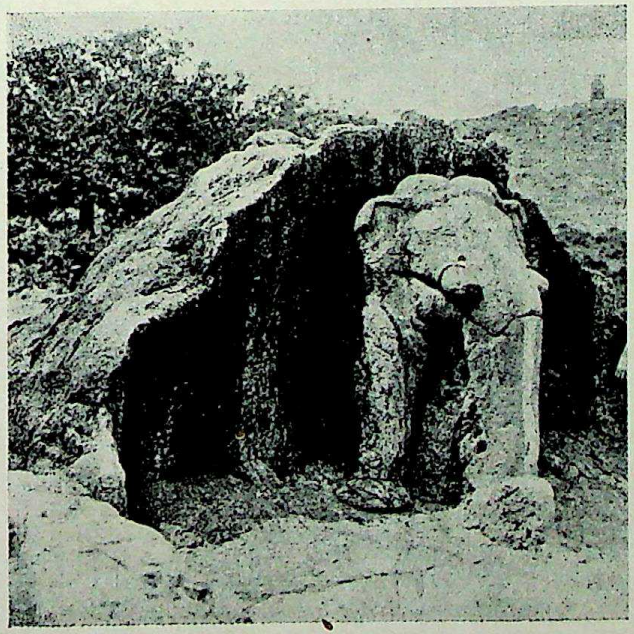
(4) The ornaments consist of heavy ear-rings, heavy torque (*Kaṇṭhā*) and a flat triangular necklace and also armlets with feathered projections.



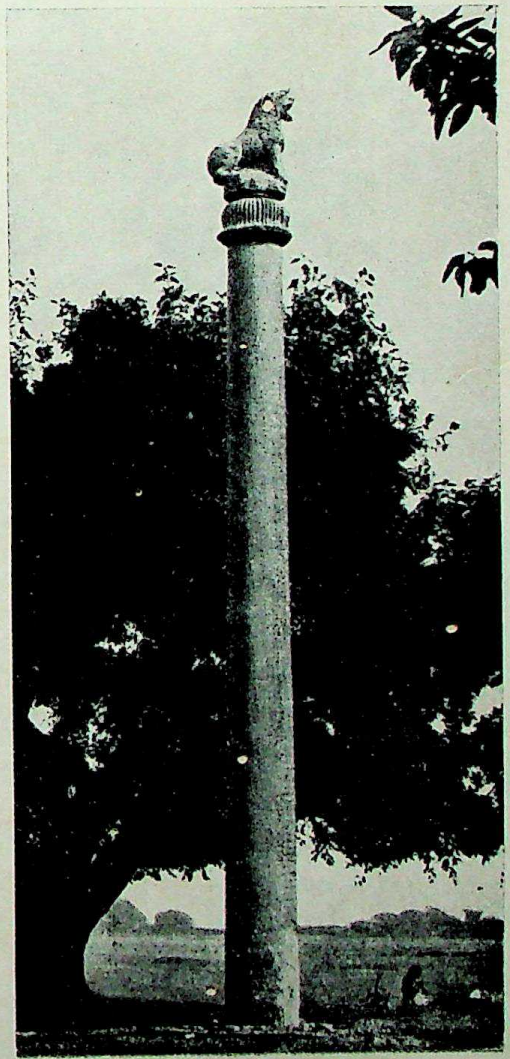
A. Yakshi. Didarganj.



B. Facade of Lomas Rishi Cave.



C. Elephant. Dhauli.



D. Lion pillar. Lauria Nandangarh.

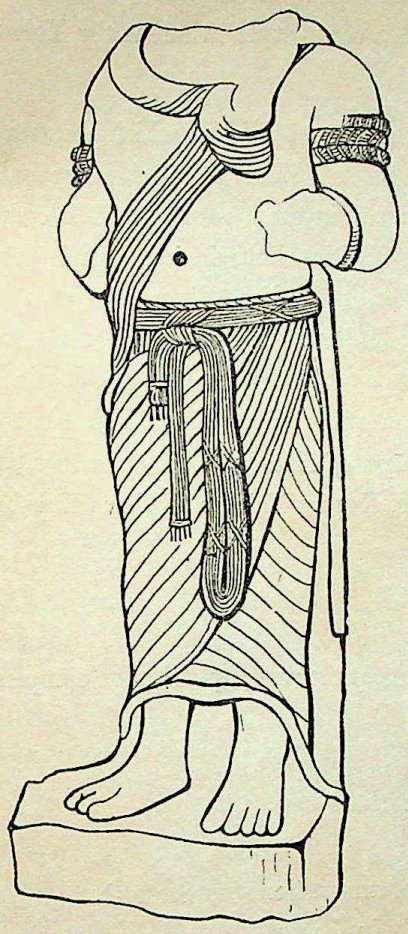


Fig. 40. Patna Yaksha

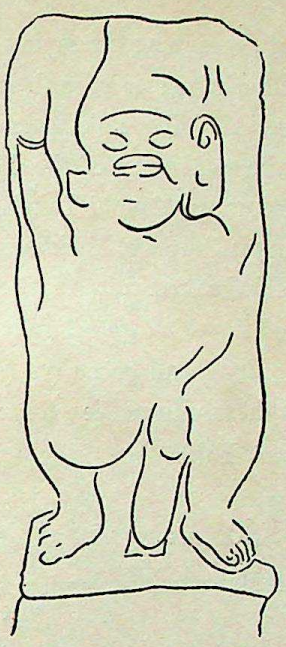


Fig. 41. Trimuksha Yaksha statue (Rajghat)

Fig. 42. Yakshī from Besnagar

(5) There is also a tendency to depict the figure as slightly protuberant or pot-bellied as in the case of the Parkham Yaksha (*Fig. 37*) and Māṇibhadra Yaksha (*Figs. 36, 38*) from Pawāyā. These images are marked by the distintive style which is the earliest in the history of Indian sculpture as known from historical sites. We have no earlier specimens to connect this style with preceding traditions or to throw light on the origin of this art. But its dominant character and almost country-wide extension, as for example from Mathura to Orissa and Pāṭaliputra to Bombay, furnish certain indications that this art must have had a long history, most probably rendered in perishable material like clay or wood. As regards their position in the evolution of Indian art the most natural suggestion is that they were executed during the Mauryan period (third century B.C.). It was just

the time when stone was being used for architecture and sculpture under the direction of the Mauryan emperors Chandra Gupta and Aśoka. The polished specimens of Mauryan art represent a court style whereas the Yaksha images are examples of folk art.

With the making of these images a style of art became established which the artists of the subsequent periods were bound to regard as their model. This is what we actually find in the art of the Sunga period. The Yaksha images carved in the monuments of Bharhut and Sanchi are the proof of the continuity of the Yaksha tradition both in iconography and in the style of art. The Bharhut and Sanchi Yakshas appear in the direct line of their ancestors, namely, the Yaksha images found at Parkham in the Mathura district and nearer home at Bhilsa and Pawāyā. The Yaksha tradition, as we shall see later, was very strongly dominating the art of the Sunga period in which we actually find a number of images of Yakshas and Yakshīs carved on various pillars and gateways (see *Stūpa of Bharhut*). The images are inscribed with the names of these cult deities, for example, Kupira Yaksha (Kubera Yaksha) or Sudasanā Yakhī (Sudarśanā Yakhī) etc.

MAURYAN ART UNDER AŚOKA :

The monuments of Mauryan art under Aśoka as preserved up-till now comprise the following :—

(1) Monolithic stone pillars.
(2) Monolithic stone railings preserved at Sarnath.
(3) Fragmentry parasol found at Sanchi.
(4) Miscellaneous male heads found during the excavations at Sarnath.
(5) Rock-cut Chaitya halls in the Barabar hills in Bihar.
(6) An elephant carved on the rock at Dhauli.
(7) A few stūpas of brick and mortar which have gone subsequent enlargement.

Aśoka may be said to have been a great builder on the basis of the surviving monuments but tradition very much exaggerates his building activities and credits him with the building of the cities, innumerable stūpas, Vihāras or monastries, pillars and railings of stone bearing inscriptions of artistic sculpture. Tradition ascribes to Aśoka the foundation of two cities, namely (1) Śrīnagara, the capital of Kashmir and (2) Devapattana, a city in Nepal. Aśoka is said to have opened original eight stūpas containing the relics of the Buddha and redistributed them over 84 thousand stūpas which, it is said, he built. Archaeological evidence acquaints us with only the few stūpas, the stūpas at Sanchi and Bharhut for example, built by Aśoka. Form his own words in the Edicts, we learn that he enlarged to twice its size the stūpa of *Kanaghamana* (Kanaka Muni), the previous Buddha at Niglīvā, and built for the sect of Ājīvikas three sets of cave-valleys (*Chaityas*) in the Barabar hills of Bihar.

Aśoka is best remembered by the monolithic pillars. A few of which have survived, rather have been discovered at Allahabad, Lauriā Ararāj, Lauriā Nandangarh (with lion capital), Rāmpurvā (with lion capital), Sanchi (Capital with four lions), Sarnath (with a capital of four lions, originally surmounted by a Dharma Chakra), Rummindei (with horse capital ?), Niglīvā and two pillars removed to Delhi by Sultan Firoj Tuglak in 1356, of which one originally stood at Meerut and the other at Topra in Ambala district.

All the above ten pillars are inscribed. There are three uninscribed pillars which are also taken on the basis of their bright polish and style to be Mauryan, namely (1) at Bakhirā (Vaiśālī, with the lion capital), (2) Sankisā (with elephant capital), and (3) Rāmpurvā with a bull capital.

Recently one inscribed pillar has been discovered without its capital at Kauśambī which also has characteristic Mauryan polish. Fa-hien noticed only six pillars but Huen-Tsang, who travelled extensively, noticed fifteen of Aśokan pillars of which only four or five can now be identified, for example, the pillars at Sankisā, Lumbini, Niglīvā, Sarnath and In his inscriptions Aśoka mentions stone pillars already existing before his time.

The pillars represent the high water-mark of Maurya achievement in the domain of fine arts. They generally consist of a round and monolithic shaft tapering from the base with a diameter ranging from about 35.5″ to 49.5″ to a total height of between 40 and 50 feet, diameter at the top ranging from 22″ to about 35″.

A study of the style of capitals of these pillars reveals some kind of chronological sequence which may be roughly arranged as follows :—

(1) The earliest one is marked by the lion capital at Bakhirā (*Fig. 43*) ; the elephant of Sankisā (*Fig.44*) pillar and the rock cut elephant of Dhauli also belong to the crude style.

(2) The next stage is represented by the Rāmpurvā bull cpital (*Fig. 45*) followed closely by the lion capital at Lauriā Nandangarh (*Ftg. 46*). In both of these we find the dignity of conception and balance in the execution of the different parts.

(3) The final stage is represented by the lion capital at Rāmpurvā (*Fig. 47*) and the lion capital at Sanchi following closely the lion capital at Sarnath (*Fig. 48*).

The Bakhira Lion Capital :

The lion figure is clumsy and crude in style ; the shaft of the column is heavy and dwarfish in proportion. The animal is uncomfortably placed on its abacus. It is rather wooden in appearance and lacks in natural expression. The whole attitude is artificial and

primitive (*Fig. 43*). Though the sculptor betrays his capacity to handle the mass before him and to bring out a living form, there is no plastic feeling in the body of the lion. The abacus, the inverted lotus and the standing shaft all point to an inferior workman who had not the ability to integrate all the three elements of the pillar with its capital. We miss here that essential majesty which is associated with the Mauryan pillars.

THE ELEPHANT CAPITAL AT SANKISA :

The capital consists of three parts, namely (1) an eleppant on the top, (2) a round abacus in the middle and (3) an inverted lotus below. The decoration on the abacus consists of the honey-suckle design and lotus, and a reel border. Here the abacus and the inverted lotus are much better but the elephant is rather plump and static. It does not show any motion and its front legs are fitted like pillars (*Fig. 44*). The attitude of the body fails to harmonise with the abacus and the lotus capital below.

RAMPURVA BULL CAPITAL :

It consists of an animal sculpture at the top, a round abacus in the middle and an inverted lotus below seperate by a corded design in between them. The bull stands in a graceful manner harmoniously poised on the abacus. Its weight rests on its base in a natural way (*Fig. 45*). The three elements of this pillar are symmetrical and rendered with remarkable clarity. The body of the animal is muscular and the plastic treatment is of natural character.

LAURIA NANDANGARH LION CAPITAL :

This capital consists of a sejant lion, a round abacus decorated with pecking-geese-pattern similar to that in Rāmpurvā lion capital and finally an inverted lotus below. The lower most portion is covered with overflowing recurved and stylised petals. It shows the cord design both above and below. In this example the expression in the figure of the lion is much more vigorous and intense (*Fig. 46*). The details of the nerves and the veins are more sharply defined, yet the whole figure is marked by a good deal of stylising.

RAMPURVA LION CAPITAL :

It is similar to the lion capital at Lauriā Nandangarh. In that it consists of three elements, namely, a sejant lion, a round abacus with row of Haṁsas and a lotus with overflowing leaves and petals seperated by a plain round moulding. The lion figure is well executed and displays all those qualities that are associated with the master-pieces of Mauryan sculpture (*Fig. 47*), namely, a perfectly natural form, dynamic expression, technical perfection in the precision of cutting and chiselling ; and above all a harmony of its component parts, the abacus adequately ballances the animal figure, it supports. Some have regarded the lion figure of Rāmpurvā capital to be even superior to those of the Sarnath lion capital, the latter being slightly on the side of greater stylization.

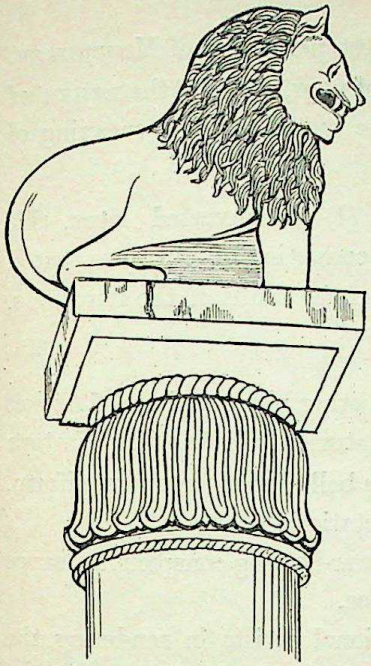


Fig. 43. Lion Capital from Bakhirā

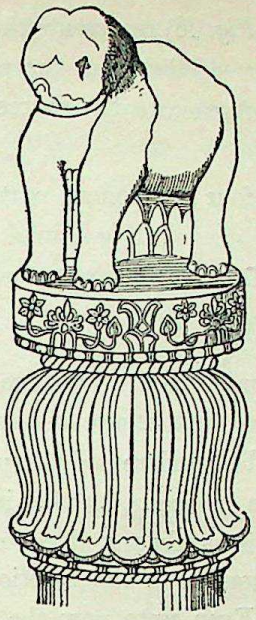


Fig. 44. Elephant Capital from Sankisā

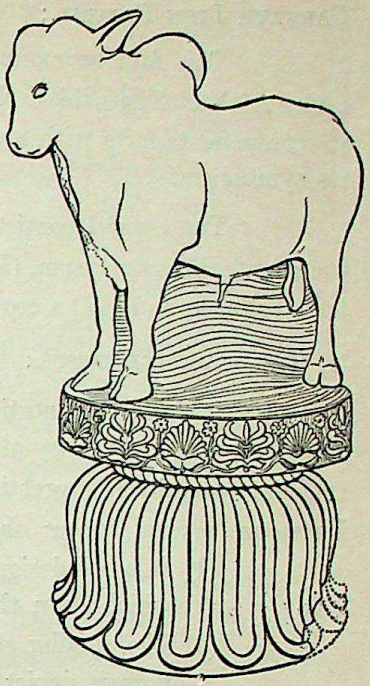


Fig. 45. Bull Capital Rāmpurvā

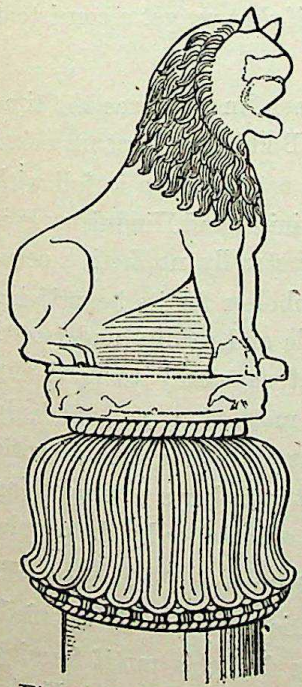


Fig. 46. Lion Capital, Lauriā Nandangarh

Fig. 47. Lion Capital, Rāmpurvā

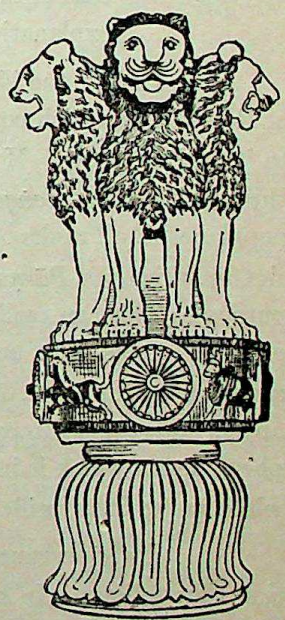


Fig. 48. Lion Capital, Sārnath

SARNATH LION CAPITAL :

This famous monument (*Fig. 48*) represents the highest perfection of Mauryan art under Aśoka. The capital should be studied from two points of view, namely, the nature of its component parts with special reference to the source of the motifs, and the meaning of its symbolism.

The capital consisted of four component parts, viz. (I) the inverted lotus, (II) the round abacus or drum, (III) the surmounting animal figure consisting of four lions seated back to back, and (IV) a crowning Dharma Chakra supported on the heads of the four lions.

(I) THE INVERTED LOTUS :

Its lowermost portion is similar to that we have in the other pillar capitals of Aśoka. There is some controversy about the exact nature and nomenclature of this motif. Western scholars generally interpret it as a bell and regard the parts as bell-shaped or campaniform. There are several cogent objections in accepting this interpretation :—

(1) In a bell design there is hardly any place for the over-flowing conspicuous leaves which form the decoration of the exterior suface.

(2) The smaller sepals—Even upto now the traditional artists in rendering the flowers depict both the petals (*Paṅkhaḍī*) and sepals (*Bachheḍī*).

(3) If we explain the motif as a bell there is no point in the corded or rope design or plain moulding which we see in the neck of the object. It is only in the case of the pot and the foliage or vase and flower motif that we get a consistent explanation of these various decorative features.

Firstly, the idea of *Pūrṇaghaṭa* or *Maṅgala Kalaśa* had been known since the time of Ṛigveda for which continuous literary evidence is available. The Buddhist literature refers to it as *Puṇṇghaṭa*. More than literature actual religious as well as art tradition is full with this motif of the *Maṅgala Kalaśa*. It is universal in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. It is popular with all ranks of people, both rich and poor, and there is practically no festive occasion in which the *Pūrṇaghaṭa* is not installed either as religious symbol or for its beautifying purpose. This can really be said to have been a universal, accessible and readily understood of the symbols. Its auspicious character is so obvious and patent as hardly to need any argument. Moreover, there is another fact to be considered. A motif does not suddenly appear in art and disappears without leaving any trace in subsequent art. It is not an exotic phenomenon which is introduced for a while and then discarded. It is rather a natural thing which grows from inside the tradition and is the fruit of an intelligent acceptance by the people.

Its appearance in art in subsequent years is linked in a perfect manner with the tradition that follows. In the case of the Pūrṇaghaṭa motif this condition is perfectly satisfied, for in the couple of centuries after the Mauryan art under Aśoka we find this motif forming a very natural element of the pillar decoration in the Buddhist art at Bharhut, Sanchi, Karle, Kanheri, etc.

Thus it will appear that this element of Aśokan capital is more naturally explained and understood in the contest of Indian art tradition. Of course, there is the element of stylization, so far as artistic rendering of the motif is concerned. That also can be properly appreciated when we see that even in the rendering of the lion figures in this capital the artist did admit a certain amount of conventional treatment as in the case of the moustaches and manes of the lions.

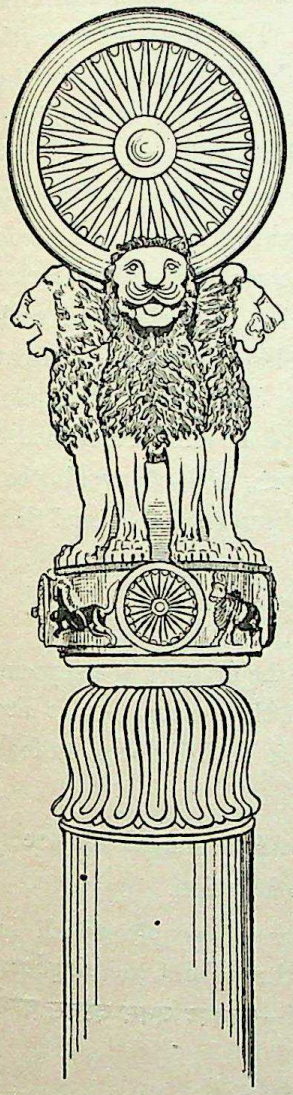


Fig. 49. Sarnath Lion Capital with *Dharma Chakra*

(2) The Abacus (*Phalaka*) :

The next component part in the making of the lion capital consists of an abacus or round drum of pleasing proportion which is decorated by four running animals alternating with four smaller *Dharma Chakras*. The animals are an elephant, a horse, a bull and a lion. Each Dharma Chakra has 24 spokes. The animals are depicted in a running posture going round and round the supposed central axis. Quite obviously both the animals and the wheels possess a symbolic character and cannot be taken to be merely decorative. The full significance of the symbol will be discussed later.

(3) The four lions :

The third constituent part of this Aśokan capital or Sarnath capital consists of four majestic lions seated on their hind legs in an addorsed position.

They supported on their heads a *Dharma Chakra* (*Fig. 49*) of bigger size which forms the fourth part of this capital. The total height of the lion capital without Dharma Chakra is 10 ft. and its breadth across the abacus is 12′ 11″. The *Dharma Chakra* on the top was about twice as big as the smaller Dharma Chakras on the abacus. It had 32 spokes and its base was inserted in a mortise hole 8″ in diameter with a depth of 4″. During the excavations at Sarnath about half a dozen fragments from the spokes and the rim of this *Dharma Chakra* were found which bear the same bright polish as the rest of the capital.

All authorities are agreed that the Sarnath lion capital represents the perfection of Mauryan art and testify to the undisputed mastery of the Mauryan stone-cutters of technical execution. Sir John Marshall considers it as the finest carving that India has yet produced and unsurpassed by anything of its kind in the ancient world. Dr. V. A. Smith has observed, "The skill of the stone-cutter

may be said to have attained perfection, and to have accomplished the task which would perhaps be found beyond the powers of the 20th century. Gigantic shafts of hard sand stone, 30 ft. or 40 ft. in length, were dressed and proportioned with the utmost nicety, receiving a polish which no modern nation knows how to import to the material".

Commenting on the art of lion capital Sir John Marshall has observed, "The Sarnath capital, on the other hand, though by no means a masterpiece, is the product of the most developed art of which the world was cognizant in the 3rd century B.C.—the handiwork of one who had generations of artistic effort and experience behind him. The masterful strength of the crowning lions with their swollen veins and tense muscular development and in the spirited realism of the reliefs below, there is no trace whatever of the imitations of primitive art so far as naturalism was his aim. The sculptor has modelled the figures direct from nature and has deleted, therefore, with bold faithful touch, but he has done more than this, he has consciously and of set purpose infused the tectonic (related to architecture) conventional spirit in to the four lions, so as to bring them in to harmony with the architectural character of the monument. Equally mature is the technique of his relief work. In early Greek sculpture it was the practice to compress the relief between two fixed planes, the original front plane of the statue and the plane of the background. In the reliefs of the Sarnath capital there is no trace, whatever of this process, each and every part of the animal is modelled according to its actual depth without a reference to an ideal front plane, with the result that it presents the appearance almost of a figure in the round which has been cut in half and then applied to the background of the abacus".

MEANING OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE SARNATH LION CAPITAL :

It may be said at the outset that the Sarnath lion capital is the product of a supreme religious symbolism in which each part is a conscious conception in the aggregate. It also appears that this symbolism was the result of an attempt to illustrate Aśoka's own outlook and philosophy of human relationships.

The grand architect of the idea underlying this capital was Aśoka himself, as exemplified by the following three facts of his outlook on life and administration.

The first fact relates to his close contact with the masses of people which he realised in his own person and also by organised tours of his officers throughout the kingdom. The nature of this mass contact is laid down in one of his edicts—**जानपद जनस दसनस धम्म पलिपुछा धम्मानुसिट्ठि.**

This, in fact, is the innovation of policy by the emperor aiming at mass contact through direct visits to the people, holding discussions with them on the problems of *Dhamma* or moral life, and finally enlightening them about the new ideas and definition of *Dhamma* as formulated by the emperor. This then announces a new respect for the people, hitherto unknown and unthought of in the ancient annals of the country by any monarch.

The second dominant fact about Aśoka was his paramount position as the emperor of a vast empire (महालक विजित), extending right from Bactria to Mysore and from Saurāshṭra on shores of the western ocean to Kaliṅga on the eastern sea-coast. His authority was unchallenged and almost unparallelled. All that he did was in the capacity of the supreme head of the secular state and also as the spiritual guide, friend and philosopher of the strongly organised spiritual church of Buddhism. Whatever the emperor would think, plan and do, the effect of the emperor's power as the supreme ruler of his people would primarily dictate action and had to be taken into account.

The above two factors were shared by other kings also before and after him, but what was unique as a force in shaping the policies of Aśoka was his new outlook of *Dhamma* or the law of moral piety which served as the main spring of his actions. The edicts are eloquent about his ideal of *Dhamma Vijaya* which was a moving passion with him.

These three facts, therefore, demanded adequate expression in the symbolism of art created for him or at his instance by his workmen. If we apply these three ideals to the various parts of the capital, we may readily discover that the crowning *Dharma Chakra* symlises the policy of *Dharma Vijaya*, the four seated lions represent the majesty and power of the emperor as the supreme ruler of the land. The next constituent part comprising the decoration on the abacus falls in line with the ideal of serving the masses through *Dhamma*. The four animals represent the divinity in the various orders of social organisations and the *Dharma Chakra* illustrates its underlying unity as actually happened in the life of Aśoka. These three orders of reality were integrated and combined into a supreme manifestation of all the resources and availability of the ruler and his kingdom. These three things together represent the emotional integration of the personality of Aśoka himself who dedicated his life and his kingdom to the welfare of his people through the ideal of *Dhamma*.

ORIGIN OF MAURYAN ART :

The question of the origin and the sources of inspiration behind the monuments of Mauryan art is of considerable importance.As is well known there is absence of specimens of monuments representing the several phases of pre-Mauryan art but there is enough evidence in literature to indicate that art in India had a long history even before the Mauryan period. For example, we have literary references to royal palaces built on a thousand pillars (सहस्स खंभ पासाद), assembly halls (*Sabhā, Saṁthāgāra*), pillars (थंभ, स्थूणा), towns (पुर) and cities (नगर), gateways (गोपुर, द्वार) and city-walls (प्राकार), stūpas, Chaityas, railings (वेदिका), caves (शैलगुहा), temples of gods (देवगृह, देवायतन), images (प्रतिमा, रूपक) and to a number of subsidiary crafts such as wood-carving (काष्ठकर्म, तक्षण), weaving, lapidary's art (मणिकर्म, मणिशिल्प), jweller's art (सुवर्णशिल्प) etc. There is no doubt that actual archaeological evidences of any specimens preceding Mauryan art are few and far between, but there were rich artistic traditions which found expression in one or more of the above classes of art objects which undoutedly existed. So far

as architectural buildings are concerned they were almost exclusively rendered or made of wood as shown by the remanents of the wooden palisade of Pāṭaliputra. The style of the earliest Chaitya halls in the Barabar hills provides ample proof of early wooden protatypes. In the Chaitya halls in western Indian caves elements of wooden constructions as vaulted ribs and *Kīrtimukha* sereen have actually survived. There are the minute details in the railings of Sanchi and Bharhut which cannot be explained except with reference to the requirements of wooden architecture. The ancient Yaksha statues, a few of which have been preserved, also furnish evidence of the existence of the art of image-making in the pre-Mauryan times.

But the question, which concerns us, directly relates to the origin of such finished art as that of the lion capital of Aśoka, which displays the climax of technical perfection and a complete mastery of the secrets of modelling and carving in the round. The Mauryan polish itself is without any traces of its existence either in the succeeding or preceding periods. What then was the source of the unprecedented artistic activity during the reigns of Chandra Gupta and Aśoka ? In the words of Sir John Marshall, "What is the explanation of the gulf which separates these two sculptures (1) the primitive unifacial image of Parkham and (2) the richly modelled capital of Sarnath ?". He himself gave an answar to this question, namely, that it was the Achaemenian art of Iran which served as the model for the Mauryan art through the intermediary agencies of the Hellenistic artists of Bactria. According to him the Aśokan edicts were inspired by the Achaemenian inscriptions and the Mauryan palace at Pāṭaliputra by the palaces at Susa and Persipolis built by emperor Darius in the hey-day of that most glorious empire of antiquity. According to him it was in Persia that the animal-crowned capitals of pillars were evolved. The smooth shafts of the Mauryan pillars were copied from Persian originals of which specimens are still existent in the plain of Murghat at Istakhr, Naksh-i-Rustum and Persipolis. It was from Persia again that craftsmen of Aśoka learnt to give a lustrous polish to stone of which abundant evidence survives at Persipolis and elsewhere. Sir John Marshall belives that the Persian influence came to India through Bactria in which area there were great centres of civilisation under the Selucids with whom political and cultural relations were established by the Indians. He has emphatically stated that the Sarnath capital is alien to Indian ideas in expression and in execution. So far as the contents of the lion capital, i.e. the ideas of expression, are concerned, we have already seen from a two-fold approach how these ideas are wholly indigenous. On the other hand, they are completely in accord with the tradition of Indian art both preceding and following the reign of Aśoka. Secondly the *Dharma Chakra*, the four lions and the figures on the round abacus are eloquent expressions of the personal ideas and ideals of Aśoka, with respect to the love in the Law of Piety inculcated by the Buddha; they illustrate his mighty authority as the sovereign of a vast empire, and his keen anxiety to establish living contacts with his people as no crowned head had done before.

So far as the problem of the technical execution of the lion capital is concerned (the lion capital in particular and the Aśokan art in general) it may be conceded that Western Asiatic forms as well as Achaemenian influences were at work to some extent at the Maurya court. According to the established practice of the times reputed artists and expert workmen were summoned from distant places and commissioned with large-scale undertakings to carry out the architectural programmes of ambitious emperors. Fortunately, both in India and in Iran we come across evidence of this international partnership in architectural experiment. The best known historical example is that of Darius who built the famous palaces at Susa and Persipolis by following an ambitious plan of extending invitations to expert workmen in many countries and ordered the import of material from numerous places outside Iran. In the foundation charter of the palace at Susa is stated that the emperor Darius invited adepts in various crafts to come from many distant provinces of his empire including Gandhāra and Sind ; the latter named fact clearly points to the knowledge of the Indian people that foreign workmen were employed in such big undertakings. Chandragupta Maurya and his successors Bindusāra and Aśoka seem to have followed the normal practice of the time and may have invited workmen from Iran just as Darius had invited them from India. As Marshall has himself admitted Iranian workmen assisted by a rich team of Indian artists and architects who should be credited with the taking of a responsible share in the execution of the work. On the Indian side also we have the explicit evidence of the *Mahābhārata* where it is stated in the Sabhā Parvan that the services of the architect *Maya* (who was of the Asura race) were employed by the royal court of *Indraprastha* for building the assembly hall (*Sabhā*). Naturally, *Maya* as superintending architect was allowed complete freedom to plan and execute the important architectural commission entrusted to him in accordance with his own artistic talents as well as Indian traditions. The descriptions of the *Yudhishṭhira-Sabhā*, as recorded in the Sabhā Parvan of the *Mahābhārata*, leave no room for doubt that both traditions, Iranian as well as Indian, were drawn upon by *Maya* so much so that we find there is a definite mention of the bright polish on the surface of the walls and on pillars of that assembly hall. Although set in a semi-mythical mould the story of the architect *Maya* is clearly eloquent with historical implications; as more than one scholar have already appreciated the fact, the description of the *Yudhishṭhira Sabhā* in the Sabhā Parvan may be ascribed to the Mauryan or post-Mauryan period.

We may thus imagine that the Mauryan art was the result of a fusion of what was best in the past tradition of India and Iran. An exact parallel may be pointed out in the creations of the Mughal art under Akbar in which Indian painters of established tradition were working side by side with the master painters of Persia and the emperor, naturally, was keenly desirous to utilise without a distinction the services of the most talented artists living in his time.

A similar phenomenon was witnessed in the Mauryan period in that the finished products of Mauryan art possessed certain features taken from abroad, but are at the same time distinguished by the Indian elements of form, theme and decoration. Such motifs as the row of pecking geese, lotus creepers, the four traditional animals, the Dharma Chakra etc. are entirely of Indian tradition.

In speaking of the foreign influences on the form and style we cannot forget to note the differences between the pillars and capitals of Achaemenian art and of Mauryan art. Here are some of those features :—

(1) Stone columns of the Mauryan hall at Pāṭaliputra (Chandragupta *Sabhā*) do do not show any capitals where as the pillars in the palace-hall at Persipolis are provided with figured capitals.

(2) The Iranian pillars stand either on bell-shaped bases or on plain circular mouldings, whereas the independent Mauryan columns had no base at all. Secondly the bell-form used in the base of the Persian pillars is a part of the capital in the Mauryan columns and produces an altogether different aesthetic effect.

(3) In form and appearance the so-called Mauryan bell is a long way off from the Iranian bell. The latter consists of a ring of petals or reels on the upper end, but has no bulge in the middle portion from which the so-called Mauryan bell derives so much beauty. Moreover the so-called Mauryan bell is made to approximate as nearly as possible the Indian traditional designs of pot and foliage (*Pūrṇa Ghaṭa*) rendered in a stylised manner. The *Pūrṇa Ghaṭa* motif was known from the time of Ṛigveda. Moreover it was associated with Indian pillars made of wood both to make it look more beautiful as well as to preserve it from decay. A plain circular pillar fragment made of wood resembling the plain shaft of the Aśokan pillar has been actually found in a mound at Lauriā Nandangarh. In the early Buddhist literature as well as in the Epics there are references to pillars standing independently in religious buildings and public places. Aśoka himself has mentioned the existence of such pillars. Similarly with respect to the animal capitals on the top of the Mauryan pillars, it was an ancient practice of providing pillars with animal capitals as shown by such references as *Garuḍadvaja, Vṛishadhvaja, Makaradhvaja* etc. Therefore the upper component part of the Mauryan capitals fitted very well with the literary and artistic traditions of pre-Mauryan India.

(4) The shaft of the Iranian columns is fluted in all cases except in the facade of the tombs or the Nechropolis (श्मशान) and also the single column that remains from the palace of Cyrus (करुष). This latter pillar dates from the time when the Iranian art had not evolved its classical forms. The style of

the plain unfluted columns was discarded by the Achaemenians themselves. It would be wrong to suggest that the Mauryan sculptors ignoring the fluted shaft of the time of Darius went back in search for their models to the primitive designs of Cyrus. In the case of the pillars of Nechropolis they form part of the rock-cut tombs of the time of Darius and Yorks. In these tombs the shaft was kept plain because the vaults stood at a considerable height above the ground and if the pillars were made fluted it would have further reduced the columns and diverted them of a frank and clear aspect, if viewed from a distance. The Persian sculptor modified the form as the Greeks often did in similar cases. We may thus justifiably search for the original model of the plain Mauryan columns in such wooden pillars as found at Lauriā Nandangarh.

(5) There is one more difference of a conspicuous character. The Achaemenian shaft when erected independently is made up of several segments while the Mauryan pillars are monolithic. The Persian columns show the requirements of stone while the Mauryan pillar is connected with the originals of timber construction which were made of entire logs of wood.

(6) The Persian and the Mauryan capitals also show marked difference. The former are crowned with a cluster of stylised palm leaves and consist of two human-headed bulls or lions seated back to back, or, by an inverted cup and the whole shows projecting double volutes. These elements do not find exact counterparts in the Mauryan capitals which show animal figures but not human-headed and the so-called bell form is covered by a stylised lotus petals. The crowning abacus and its decoration as found in Mauryan capitals are absent in Achaemenian art.

(7) Lastly, the Persian columns were introduced to form part of elaborate architectural construction. But the Aśokan pillars were intended to serve as independent monuments and designed to produce their effect as such. They are simpler, more harmonious and give a better feeling of stability, dignity and strength. The Mauryan column is no doubt an original construction of indigenous art of that period.

The bright lustrous polish is a distinctive feature of Mauryan (Aśokan) art. We should, however, remember that specimens of pre-Mauryan art in stone have not servived and it is difficult to be positive on this point whether this polish was produced in India for the first time in the Mauryan period. We should draw attention to literary evidences which refer to such polish. Firstly, there is the description of a palace-hall built on the bank of the Gaṅgā bearing such polish on its walls and ceiling in the '*Mahā Ummagga Jātaka*'; and secondly in the description of the assembly hall of *Yudhishṭhira*,

In the latter case the architect is *Maya* Asura who was a foreigner employed at the royal court of Yudhishṭhira and it is quite possible that the idea and technique of imparting this kind of polish to the surface of the stone was borrowed from outside, sometimes before or during the early Mauryan period.

The question remains open for final judgement until some more archaeological evidence comes forth.

V

ŚUNGA ART

10. THE GREAT STŪPA OF BHARHUT

The Mahāstūpa at Bharhut was discovered by Cunningham in 1873 and fully exposed in 1874. Its railings and gateways were then removed to the Indian Museum Calcutta where they still form a magnificent collection of early Indian art. The discoverer fulfilled his due obligation to the monument by publishing the famous work, '*Stupa of Bharhut*', of which the excellent photographic reproductions on 57 plates are accompanied with a clear and precise text.

The two Great Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi were the outcome of a continental planning, the former occupying a central position on the eastern route and the latter on the western. These two parallel routes were bee-hives of transport, the one connecting Śrāvastī and Kośāmbī with the Chedi country on the Narmadā and South Kosala, and the other leading from Mathurā to Vidisā and Pratishṭhāna on the Godāvarī in the south. The eastern highway picked up the two important sectors ; one from Magadha via the Sona valley and the other from seaports of Kaliṅga through the forest regions of Gondwānā. Similarly the western route received two feeders ; one from Ujjaini and the other from the seaports of Bhṛigukachchha and Sūrpāraka (modern Sopārā). The religious zeal of the rich merchants of these two regions deposited their wealth as treasure-troves in the form of the two great Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi.

The monuments served as the two valves of the pulsating heart of Madhyadeśa sending out cultural effusions in all directions on those routes. Today we find them as epic records of the culture, society, religion and art of the teeming millions settled in the centre and on the periphery of this vast area. Through the two sparkling eyes of these Mahāchetiyas, we find access to a rich documentary of early Indian cultural institutions similar in scale to as the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata.

The Stūpa although now associated primarily with Buddhism had a much earlier origin. It goes back to the Ṛigveda where the Golden Stūpa of Agni (हिरण्यस्तूप) is the type of the huge Pile of Splendour out of which the cosmos is produced. It was the very symbol of the life-principle conceived as the Mound of Gold or the Pillar of Fire, because in Vedic symbology gold exemplified the Seed of Life or Life itself. In pre-Buddhist tradition the Stūpa, therefore, was accepted as the monument associated with the life of a Mahāpurusha, who had truly become transformed into a "Pile of Light" or "Mound of Gold". Verily, in nature Sūrya is such a Pillar of Light or a Mound of Gold, a vast conflagration of Divine Resplendence. The Buddha who had obtained such perfection of knowledge and become the Enlightened One (भगवान्, सम्यक् सम्बुद्ध,), was truly the object of worship through the symbol of the Stūpa. As tradition says, his ashes were parcelled out into eight

portions and each of them (शरीरधातु) was deposited in a commemorative Stūpa. Of these eight, seven were raised by Kshatriyas, viz. temporal powers, and the eighth by a Brāhmaṇa representing the Spiritual Authority of the Buddha. It means that the original Stūpa symbolism associated with the Buddha represented completely the two essential elements of his nature, viz. the Buddha as Chakravartī and the Buddha as Yogī which later on played an important part in the formulating of the Buddha's image, i.e. sovereign ruler with *Chhatra* and *Chāmara* and a Yogic teacher of universal Dharma seated on the diamond seat of *Padmāsana*.

The Stūpa exercised its fascination on the minds of the people. The learned regarded it as a metaphysical symbol and the common man worshipped it as the visible symbol of the Great Light that once was and whose relics were still enshrined within the heart of the Stūpa. The spherical or cylindrical drum, sited on the ground and crowned by a *Harmikā*, or Divine Mansion (देव-सदन), was in itself a complete symbol of the Mahāpurusha, the Great Being. The Buddha was but a manifestation of the powers that inhere in that universal Purusha, whose symbol is Sūrya. As a scion of the solar dynasty, viz. the race of the Ikshvāku Kings whose descent from Sūrya was well known, he represented an individual ray of that Light which is the Divine Supernal Sun. It was, therefore, a problem for the early metaphysicians in Buddhism to fix upon an appropriate symbol to commemorate the Englightened One. The Chakra and the Stūpa were selected as two arch-symbols by the early Buddhist teachers. The Wheel or Chakra became the symbol of Dharma, i.e. the World Order of which the Buddha was an exalted exponent. The Dhamma is the foundation and support of the cosmos, and is the perfect symbol of Time which is three-fold as the Chakra is called *Tryadhva*, i.e. the revolving wheel of the three times (संस्कृत, अध्वन्), i.e. present, past and future" (Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybird Sanskrit Dictionary*, p. 260). The Stūpa as the second symbol represents the solar light or the Sun which is the source of the power that manifest in the Dharma Chakra.

In Vedic symbology the Stūpa of Agni as the type of the cosmic fire or the universal principle of creativity, becomes individuated at one centre in the Yajña as Yūpa, the pillar. This association is evident in the funeral mounds of Lauriā Nandangarh where the Stūpa and the Yūpa were found together, and also best illustrated in the great Stūpa of Sanchi where Aśoka erected his pillar in front of the original Stūpa.

The symbolism or the representational basis of the Yūpa was completely transferred to the Stūpa as we find it in Buddhism. The Yūpa was comprised of the following four parts :—

(1) The portion that is dug in the ground (निखात). This is sacred to the world of the fathers (पितृ), the departed ancestors in whose memory the Stūpa also is raised.

(2) The portion above the dug-in-part up to the girdle-rope (ऊर्ध्वं निखातादारशनायै) This is the portion sacred to the world of men (मनुष्यलोक).

(3) The portion above the girdle up to the top-ring (यद् ऊर्ध्वं रशनाया आचषालम्) This is sacred to the world of Gods (देवलोक).

(4) The space of two or three fingers' breadth above the top-ring (ऊर्ध्वं चषालात् द्व्यंगुलं वा त्र्यंगुलं वा). This uppermost portion is sacred to the world of the Archetypal Gods (साध्यदेव)[1].

This is a clear annunciation of the four-footed Great Being (चतुष्पात् महापुरुष or ब्रह्म) who becomes manifest in the cosmos as the Three Feet (त्रिपाद्) and remains unmanifest in the transcendent source as the One Foot (एकपाद्). In the Stūpa architecture this conception received complete acceptence in the form of the various portions as the foundation, the drum, the dome and the *Harmikā*. The Trinitarian conception received further elaboration in the building of the Stūpa as its three terraces (त्रिमेधि) and the three railings (त्रिवेदिका), viz. on the ground floor providing for the first circumambulation, the second in the middle also giving space for the next processional path and the third on the truncated top circumscribing the *Harmikā*. In the Hindu Temple also, of which the architecture followed similar metaphysical principle, we find this four-fold division in the form of the basement (जगती), the cubical portion (गर्भगृह or मंडोवर), the tower (शिखर), and the *Kalaśa* placed on the *Āmalaka Śilā* as its base and surmounted on the top by the *Dhvaja* or the emblem of the deity, corresponding to the Yashṭi and Chhatra in the centre of the *Harmikā*. It is evident that the ancient Stūpa and the Prāsāda were developed from an identical religious consciousness and both were symbolical representations of the manifest cosmos and the unmanifest Divine. In one case the deity is the Buddha, in the other the Deva, both enshrining the Great Light. The Stūpa from this point of view, although raised on the relics of a Mahā-Purusha when he had passed away, actually was not a mournful sign but an emblem of greatest festivity. That the Great Man had entered *Parinirvāṇa* was no cause for sorrow. The idea behind it was one of universal joy and felicitation—a thanksgiving that the Mahāpurusha had appeared on earth and lighted a flame which was going to be perpetual, a light which would never be put out, a ray emanating from his forehead that would encompass all regions of space. Thus the Stūpa was, verily, the Mound of Gold (हिरण्य-स्तूप), standing as the dominant symbol of Wisdom, Dharma and Sovereign Spiritual Authority. This is shown in the numberous scenes of dance and music as well as of the varied life of gods and men amongst the carved scenes on the ralings and gatways of the Stūpas, and later on as at Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍā even on the casing slabs.

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[1] तस्य यन्निखातम्। तेन पितृलोकं जयत्यथ यद्ध्वं निखातादारशनायै तेन मनुष्यलोकं जयत्यथ यदूर्ध्वं रशनाया आ चषालात्तेन देवलोकं जयत्यथ यदूर्ध्वं चषालाद्द्व्यंगुलं त्र्यंगुलं वा साध्या इति देवास्तेन तेषां लोकं जयति सलोको वै साध्यैर्देवैर्भवति य एवमेतद्वेद ॥ शतपथ ब्रा० ३, ७, १, २५; See Eggeling, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXXI, pp. 173—4.

Thus it is clear that the Stūpa raised its monumental head as a complete sample of the indigenous religious spirit rooted deep in the soil and in the hearts of the people. It was not an exotic innovation and did not depart from the belief universally held. It is, therefore, that we find the entire community of the people dedicating themselves, as shown by the donative epigraphs, to the building and the worship of the Stūpas. This is also the reason why the Stūpa did not from the outset remain exclusive but incorporated within its fold the popular cults of the Nāgas, Yakshas, Suparṇas, Kumbhāṇḍas, and the numerous rich worlds of gods and men. Just as the various streams mingle their waters in the ocean similarly the various cults wholeheartedly contributed through the planning, decoration, imagery and the over all embellishment of the Stūpa. The building of a Mahāstūpa like that of Bharhut and Sanchi could not have been an ordinary event. It was as if the multifold life of the whole people found its ample and lofty expression in these monumental Mahāchaityas. That it was no haphazard event either, is also demonstrated by the all-out sanction which the great Buddha himself had given in its favour as his last will to Ānanda.

"How should we honour the body (relic-bones) of the Tathāgata ?" asked Ānanda.

"O, Ānanda ! You need not engage yourself in worshipping the body of the Tathāgata. But you dedicate yourself to the right meaning (सदत्थ) expounded by the Tathāgata as so many Kshatriyas, Brāhmaṇas, and householders are doing".

But Ānanda out of his overpowering devotion was impervious to this suggestion of the Teacher, and he repeated the question—"How should we honour the body of the Tathāgata ?"

The Buddha knowing the devout heart of Ānanda melted and replied—"As they do for the remains of a Chakravartī King, so Ānanda ! they should do for the remains of the Tathāgata. At the four cross-roads similar to the Stūpa they raise for the Chakravartī, should they raise a Stūpa for the Tathāgata.[1]

According to this injunction a Stūpa commemorates a Chakravartī king and a Buddha. Amongst those deserving by their greatness or piety the honour of a Stūpa the Buddha also included the Pratyeka Buddhas, which denoted the honoured saints of other faiths also. This tradition of giving burial to the holy saints has been handed down to this

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[1] Ānanda—'कथं मयं भन्ते तथागतस्स सरीरे पटिपज्जामा' ति ?'

Buddha—'अब्यावटा तुम्हे आनन्द होथ तथागतस्स सरीरपूजाय। इङ्घ तुम्हे आनन्द सदत्थे घटथ,····।'

Ānanda—'कथं पन भन्ते तथागतस्स सरीरे पटिपज्जितब्बं ?' ति।'

Buddha—'यथा खो आनन्द रञ्ञो चक्कवत्तिस्स सरीरे पटिपज्जन्ति, एवं तथागतस्स सरीरे पटिपज्जितब्बं' ति।'

Ānanda—'कथं पन भन्ते रञ्ञो चक्कवत्तिस्स सरीरे पटिपज्जन्ती' ति ?'

Buddha—'·····, चातुम्महापथे रञ्ञो चक्कवत्तिस्स थूपं करोन्ति। एवं·····चातुम्महापथे तथागतस्स थूपो कातब्बो।'

day. It may be imagined that the Buddha was here giving his sanction to an ancient practice well known to the people and of wide acceptance by them.

It may also be noted that in referring to the ancient tradition of the funeral mounds the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa has noted two architectural forms, viz. square (चतुःस्रक्ति) and round (परिमंडल) forms for a burial mound, and it is specially recorded that the monuments of the Easterners (प्राच्याः) were circular.[1]

The building of a Stūpa was a stirring event involving dimensional planning and effort. This is evident in the description given by the *Mahāvaṁsa* (Chapters 28—31). The Great Stūpa was known as *Mahā Thūpa*, or *Mahā Chetiya* (20.4). Its construction was known as *Thūpa-Kamma* or *Mahāthūpārambha*, and the superintendent of work as *Kammādhiṭṭhāyaka* (30.98). A stone-Stūpa was called *Silā Thūppa*. The *Mahāvaṁsa* specifically tells us that at the site of the Stūpa (थूपठ्ठान) a pillar was erected and in accordance with the ancient terminology, pointed out above, this pillar continued to be called a Yūpa (हारेत्वा हि तहिं यूपं थूपठ्ठानं अखानयि). On the appointed day the Priest and the people assembled at the chosen spot. A Full Vase (पूर्ण घट) was installed in the centre. The king walked up to it and holding out to his minister a rod (परिभमण दंडक) which was secured with a string to a fixed golden post, asked him to measure the site for the Stūpa. When this was about to be done a wise and experienced Mahāthera seeing the danger in planning a Mahāstūpa of that dimension adviced the king that he should desist from a plan of such colossal size which was difficult to achieve and restrict himself to building only a *Majjima Chetiya* instead of a *Mahā Chetiya*. The central Stūpa was called *Chetiya* and round it the paraphernalia of railing and gateways was called *Chetiyāvaṭṭa* (संस्कृत, चैत्यावर्त) i.e. the peripheral portion of the Stūpa.

The laying of the foundation was the first act in the building. Soldiers were employed for transporting pieces of broken stone (गुडपसाणक, ९.३०) which were reduced to grit form (चुण्णित) with sledge hammer (कूट). It was further pulverized by moving elephants having their feet covered with leather hoses (चम्मावनद्धपादेहि महाहत्थीहि मद्दयि, २९.४). The building expert thus accomplished consolidation of the ground (भूमिया थिरभावत्थ, २९.४). Then the foundation of this stony material (पासाणकोट्टिम) was laid over with a kind of specially prepared plaster called *Navanīta Mattikā* which was given this name from its thin consistency like that of butter (सुषमा नवीनत मत्तिका). This ancient name was replaced later on in the Gupta period by the word *Mashaka* as found in the *Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa* (40.3 ; 41.14) in connection with the plaster used in preparing the surface for painting. This is called *Masakā*

[1] चतुःस्रक्ति । देवाश्चासुराश्चोभये प्रजापत्या दिक्ष्वस्पर्धन्त देवा असुरान्त्सपत्नान्भ्रातृव्यान्दिग्भ्योऽनुदन्त तेऽदिक्काः पराभवंस्तस्माद्या दैव्यः प्रजाश्चतुःस्रक्तीनि च ताः श्मशानानि कुर्वंतेऽथ या आसुर्यः प्राच्यास्त्वद्ये त्वत्परिमण्डलानि ।

शतपथ ब्रा० १३,८,१,५ ।

in the present day terminology, which is literaly the same as *Navanīta* (Sans. म्रक्षण—Pahlavi मसका—Sans. backformation मषकम्—Hindi, Guj. मसका). This plaster-clay was prepared by mixing lime-plaster (खरसुधा), murum-sand (मरुम्ब), brick-powder (इट्ठका चुण्ण), clay (मत्तिका), realgar or red arsenic (मनोसिला) mixed with Tila oil (तिल तेल), molasses (रसोदक), pulp of the *Kapittha* fruit, *Kuruvinda* powder and some incense (सुगन्धक). This formula for preparing the *Vajra Lepa* plaster occurs also in the *Vishṇudharmottara*, which prescribes the *Bilva* fruit for *Kapittha* and names the incense as *Guggulu* (*Vishṇu D. P.* Chap. 40.1-3). Such foundation floor of stone grit and plaster was actually found at Bharhut by Cunningham.

Ten crores of bricks were ordered to be stacked at different points of the compass each marked by a platform for offering flowers (पुप्पाधान, ३०.५६, i.e., पुष्पग्रहणी वेदिका, *Buddhist Hybrid Sans. Dict.* p. 218; cf. Smith, *Mathura Jain Stūpa, plate XX*). The *Chaitya* or *Dhātugarbha* was to be built with those bricks (इट्ठका दसकोटियो, ३०.५६). The actual form of the dome is compared to a water bubble (महाबुब्बुल, ३०.१३). On the day when the construction was to begin the king ordered stores of clothes, garlands and food, barbers and toiletmen serving the whole people (पोरा जानपदा चेव), who had come to participate in the great festival with music and dance. With large retinue, including forty thousand well dressed persons, the king proceeded to the spot. Theras from many lands had gathered, what to say of the priests of the Island itself? (नानादेसा'पि आगञ्च छु बहवो भिक्खवो इध, २९.२९). Monks from Rājagriha, Śrāvastī, Vaiśālī, Kauśāmbī, Ujjayinī, Pāṭaliputra, Kashmīra, Vindhyāṭavī, Bothagayā and the Greek city Alasanda were invited and assembled in large numbers to witness the foundation ceremony. After completion the brick Stūpa was covered with slabs of marrow-colour (मेदवण्णक पासाण, ३०.५१). The decorative motifs on the various parts of the Stūpa comprised the following:—अट्ठमंगलिक (*Ashṭa Māṅgalika* symbols), पुप्फलता (flower garlands), चतुप्पद पंती (rows of animals), हंसपंती (row of geese), मुत्ताकिंकिणिकजालक (festoons of pearls and small tinklers), सुवर्णघंटापंती (row of gldden bells), दामानि (garlands), मुत्तादामकलापक (clustured pearl-pendants), रविचन्दतारूपपदुमक (full lotus medallions, crescent-shaped rosettes, stellar rosettes), पुण्णघटपंती (row of Full Vases), अंजलिपग्गहा देवा (Gods holding their hands in adoration), नच्चका देवता (सदामत्तक of दिव्यावदान, groups of dancing Gods), तुरियवादकदेवता (Gods playing on musical instruments), आदासगाहकादेवा (Gods holding mirrors), पुप्फसाखाधरादेवा (divine figures with flowering sticks), पदुमादिकगाहकादेवा (figures holding lotuses), रतनग्घिय पंती (row of jewels), धम्मचक्कपंती (row of Dharma Chakras), खग्गधरा (row of figures holding daggers), पातिधरा देवपंती (row of figures holding bowls, करोटपाणि देवाः of दिव्या०) and many other kinds of divine figures अञ्ञोदेवा च' नेकधा, ३०.६५-६८,९०-९३). Jātaka scenes were carved in the meanders of golden creepers and numerous scenes from the life of the Buddha (a list of about thirty-five scenes is being recounted), were carved on the body of the Stūpa. Figures of Mahābrahmā, Śakra, Pañchaśikha holding a *Vīṇā*, Māra with

a thousand arms along with his female retinue, the four Mahārājika Gods, the thirty-three Gods (तेत्तिस देवपुत्ता), thirty-two divine princesses (द्वात्तिसा च कुमारियो), twenty-eitht Yaksha-kings (यक्खसेनापति अट्ठवीसति), were represented. All the life-scenes of the Buddha beginning from his decision in the Tushita heaven and upto his sitting on the Bodhi Maṇḍa were depicted. The *Vessantara Jātaka* specially was rendered in great detail (वेस्संतर जातकं तु वित्थारेन अकारयि ३०.८८). Other *Jātaka* scenes also were carved on the railings and slabs of the Stūpa (ये भुय्येन अकारेसि जातकानि, ३०.८७).

The above description of a Mahāstūpa shows the extraordinary importance of these monuments in the Buddhist world. It holds good in a large measure in the cases of such Mahāstūpas as those of Bharhut and Sanchi both from the point of view of architecture and decoration, although it is of particular appliation to the Stūpas of the Andhra country, viz. those of Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍā. Those latter had decorative casing slabs which in the case of Bharhut and Sanchi were plain (रूपकानेत्थ सब्बानि धातुगब्भे मनोरमे, ३०.९७). The second architectural feature in the case of the Stūpas in the Andhra region consisted in the box-like projections on the four sides joined to the main *Garbha* and each supporting five *Āyaka Khambhas* (चतुपस्सम्हि चतुरो मञ्जूसं विय योजिय, ३०.६०). Lastly the white colour of the stone (मेदवण्ण पासाण) mentioned several times (30.57, 59, 96) gives a true pointer in the direction of the Andhra Stūpas and not those of Central India which are built of red stone.

The Stūpa of Bharhut although not *in situ* at present furnishes valuable evidence about the architecture of an ancient Stūpa. The shape of the dome at Bharhut as shown by its several representations (pls. IX, XIII, XXXI) resembles more a bell (घंटाकार) in which the ratio of the diameter to the height is less than in the case of subsequent Stūpas. The same is true of the Sanchi Stūpa. But later on there was a tendency towards cylindrical shape which was rightly compared to a giant bubble (महाबुब्बुल, महावंस ३०. १३), as also shown by the several illustrations of the monuments preserved on their railing or carved slabs.

The railing of the Bharhut Stūpa with its four gateways was highly decorated with numerous motifs which set up the norm for the various elements of decoration in subsequent art. For example, one finds here a wealth of lotus medallions (Pāli, पदुमक) with many petals, sepals, corona, calyx, treated in varying forms and combinations described in literature as *Utpala, Kaṁlāra, Śatapatra, Sahasrapatra* etc. The meandering creeper is an other essential element in the decorative *repertoire* of the Bharhut masters. Actually it represented the *Kalpalatā*, the Wish-fulfilling Creeper of heavenly origin whose tendrils fulfil all desires by producing pairs of Man and Woman (मिथुन), ornaments shown hanging from the boughs like ear-rings, necklaces, girdles, anklets etc. which are represented in several shapes; costly textiles like scarves and *Sārīṣ*; wines bottled in jars of jack fruit form technically known as *Panasa*, and also mongo-shaped pendant containers for the lac-dye to paint the feet. The motif of the *Kalpa-vṛiksha* or the *Kalpalatā* (*Fig. 4 : a, b, c and d*) belongs to the region of the Uttarakuru as found in the description given in the *Mahāvānija Jātaka* (No. 493, 352).

A group of merchants who had set out in search of a treasure came to a mighty banyan tree with cove and pleasant shade, from its eastward branch pure and clear water trickled for them ; they washed and drank their fill of it. One of the branches on the south gave them all things to eat :

'Both rice and meat out in a stream it brings,
Thick porridge ginger lentle soup and many other things'.

From the western branch :—

'Out came a bevy of fair girls all pranked in brave array,
And O the robes of many hues ; jewels, and rings in plenty !
Each merchant had a pretty maid, each of the five and twenty.

From the northern branch likewise :—

'.....out came a stream of gold,
Silver in handfuls, prescious rings and jewels manifold.
And roles of fine Benares cloth and blankets thick and thin,
The merchants then to roll them up in bundles did begin'.

The following Pāli *Gāthā* sums up the virtues of this auspicious tree :—

वारिदा पुरिमा शाखा अन्नपानञ्च दक्खिणा। नारिदा पश्चिमा शाखा सब्बकामे च उत्तरा ॥
(Fausboell, Jāt., IV. 362)

This flowery description of the idyllic land of Uttarakuru had been received from great antiquity, and is re-enforced by the literary tradition recorded in the Epic literature and Purāṇas. For example, in the Rāmāyaṇa Sugrīva directs the monkey chiefs to go in quest of Sītā in the northern direction. There, at the end of the earth they would find the land of the Uttarakurus. "Flowers of gold as resplendent as fire are seen there in eternal bloom inbued with divine fragrance. The beautiful trees produce garments of various kinds and costly gems which are pleasant for men and women to use in all seasons ; beds with beautiful coverlets and pleasing garlands, costly drinks and food of many descriptions, and to crown this all, maidens endowed with beauty, virtue and youth"[1].

[1] जातरूपमयैश्चापि हुताशनसमप्रभैः । नित्यपुष्पफलास्तत्र नगाः पत्ररथाकुलाः ॥४३॥
दिव्यगन्धरसस्पर्शाः सर्वान् कामान् स्रवन्ति च । नानाकाराणि वासांसि फलन्त्यन्ये नगोत्तमाः ॥४४॥
मुक्तावैदूर्यचित्राणि भूषणानि तथैव च । सस्त्रीणां यान्यरूपाणि पुरुषाणां तथैव च ॥४५॥
सर्वर्तुसुखसेव्यानि फलन्त्यन्ये नगोत्तमाः । महार्हमणिचित्राणि फलन्त्यन्ये नगोत्तमाः ॥४६॥
शयनानि प्रसूयन्ते चित्रास्तरणवन्ति च । मनःकांतानि माल्यानि फलन्त्यत्रापरे द्रुमाः ॥४७॥
पानानि च महार्हाणि भक्ष्याणि विविधानि च । स्त्रियश्च गुणसम्पन्ना रूपयौवनलक्षिताः ॥४७॥
(किष्किंधा काण्ड, अ० ४३)

In the Mahābhārata, the Elysian land of Uttarakuru with all kinds of plenty in fruits and flowers and with trees producing all objects of desire (सर्वकामफलाः वृक्षाः) is conceived in the nothern direction adjacent to Meru. There as fruits from trees are produced garments, ornaments and youthful pairs of men and women (मिथुनानि) who draw sustenance from the nectar-like milk of the milky trees and are perfectly matched to each other in beauty, dress and appearance. The human beings in that region are happy and contented like gods being free from all sorrows and ailments, and they do not suffer the pangs of separation'[1].

It appears that this description of Uttarakuru was an inherent part of the Bhuvana-kosha as we find it repeated in a similar context in the Vāyupurāṇa (Chap. 45, verses 11-50). The description in the Purāṇa, besides recording what the Epics contain is much more elaborate, and we find there references to streams of *madhu* and *Maireya*, of butter and curds, to mountains of delicious food, to groves furnished with beds, seats, cosmetics, garlands etc., and to a great many other items of pleasure. In that region there is sweet music of every description rising from lute, flute and tabors, and hundreds and thousands of *Kalpavṛikshas* produce fine and beautiful garments agreable to wear.

The above tradition holds the key to many a scene on gateways and railings of the great Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi. For example, we find at Sanchi carved on the western face of the western pillar of the south gateway youthful couples engaged in music and pleasure (*Fig. 32*), surrounded by birds and animals and seated under the shade of boughs overladen with costly ornaments of many kinds (Marshall, *Monuments of Sanchi*, Vol. I, p. 144 ; Vol. II, pt. XIX a). On the entrance to the cave at Bhājā the visit of king Māndhātā to Uttarakuru is illustrated with great elaboration including the garden of the *Kalpavṛiksha*-trees and of the Mithuna couples enjoying dance and music. One of the trees in the scene is in the style of a true *Kalpavṛiksha* laden with many ornaments hanging from its branches. Another shows girls coming out of its boughs.

On the Bharhut Stūpa the *Kalpavṛiksha* motif is a recurrent theme of decoration as illustrated by Cunningham on plates XXXIX-XIVIII. These show various ornaments like ear-pendants of the *Prākāra-Vapra-Kuṇḍala* type (Pl. XLI B), ear-rings of *Triratna* design (Pl. XLIV A), collars, necklaces, girdles, wristlets, spiral-finger-rings, spiral-anklets. On plate VII of *Bharhut Vedika* by S.C. Kala a beautiful armlet with triple rosettes above and a row of small pendant bells below is a high watermark of Bharhut decorative art. Amongst

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1 उत्तराः कुरवो राजन् पुण्याः सिद्धनिषेविताः ॥२॥
तत्र वृक्षा मधुफला नित्यपुष्पफलोपमाः । पुष्पाणि च सुगंधीनि रसवन्ति फलानि च ॥३॥
सर्वकामफलास्तत्र केचिद्वृक्षा जनाधिप । अपरे क्षीरिणो नाम वृक्षास्तत्र नराधिप ॥४॥
ये क्षरन्ति सदा क्षीरं षड्रसं चामृतोपमम् । वस्त्राणि च प्रसूयन्ते फलेष्वाभरणानि च ॥५॥
मिथुनानि च जायन्ते स्त्रियश्चाप्सरसोपमाः । तेषां तु क्षीरिणं क्षीरं पिबन्त्यमृतसन्निभम् ॥८॥
मिथुनं जायते काले समं तच्चप्रवर्धते । तुल्यरूपगुणोपेतं समवेषं तथैव च ॥९॥
(भीष्मपर्व, ७. २-११)

fabrics we have specimens of scarves bearing floral designs and also female *Sārīs*. B.M. Barua has illustrated some typical Bharhut ornaments in vol. III of his *Barhut*, pl. XXV. In several of the meandering creepers or the *Kalpalatā* motif, jack fruits and mango fruits are depicted, the former as containers of wine (मधु), and the latter of lac-dye for painting the feet of ladies (लाक्षाराग) as referred to by Kālidāsa. Kālidāsa has given a graphic picture of the Wish-fulfilling trees growing in the capital of the Yaksha king :—

वासश्चित्रं मधुनयनयोर्विभ्रमादेशदक्षं पुष्पोद्भेदं सहकिसलयैर्भूषणानां विकल्पान् ।
लाक्षारागं चरणकमलन्यासयोग्यं च यस्यामेकः सूते सकलमबलामण्डनं कल्पवृक्षः ॥
(मेघदूत, २।२१)

The *Kalpavṛiksha* alone provides all the dainties and fineries for the fair women of Alakā, coloured clothes for the body, intoxicating drinks for exciting glances of the eyes, and flowers for decorating the hair, ornaments of various designs and lac-paint for the feet. The same tradition in also recorded by Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa mentioning bunches of ornaments shooting forth from Wish-fulfilling creepers—परिस्फुरदाभरणसमूहेनेव कल्पलतानिवहेन, कादम्बरी (Vaidya edition, p. 186). The gift of such divine ornaments was considered as the highest blessing conferred on a human being hinted at by Kalidāsa :—

क्षौमं केनचिदिन्दुपाण्डुतरुणा मांगल्यमाविष्कृतम् ।
(शाकुन्तल, अंक—४)

The four kinds of female decorations comprised clothes, ornaments, flowery garlands and unguents, all of which were bestowed on them by the heavenly trees. The idyllic land of Uttarakuru did not remain a dream but its symbolical significance extended to every home and caught popular imagination as a motif both in literature and art from the earliest times right upto the classical period. The *Kalpavṛiksha* and *Kalpalatā* were motifs of the vegetable kingdom which in actual life represented the loving male and female relatives, father, mother, brother, husband. For example, the father typified the branch that gave ornaments; the mother the bough offering fabrics ; the brother the tendril yielding unguents ; the female companions the off-shoots bestowing the lac-dye for painting the feet ; and the husband the youthful sapling bent low to offer jugs of hilarious wine. The home or the land of Uttarakuru or the *Kalpavṛiksha* is the same, producing all these auspicious blessings including the *Mithuñas*, Man and Woman, the most auspicious symbol of them all. This, the land of Uttarakuru which was a heavenly region became mirrored as it were, in every home ; that which was an idea in heaven became concrete and manifest for the life of the individual as Home or the Family (गृहस्थ). This had been from the remote antiquity. The Indian ideal of life which no pessimistic or negative philosophy could eradicate, and naturally, therefore, the most important decorative motif on the railings and the gateways of the Great Stūpas of Bharhut and Sanchi is the representation of the Elysium named Uttarakuru, a land of complete happiness with all the wealth of its Wish-fulfilling Trees and Creepers. It was a place of highest bliss which was the same as the Vedic *Nāka* and Buddhist *Sukhāvatī*, both implying a heaven completely free from

sorrow and wants. It was a natural corollary of the positive view of life almost universally held in India that both in literature and art the *Kalpavṛiksha* motifs stand so pre-eminent with its deep symbolical significance. It was common to the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Bhāgavtas. In Jaina literature we read of ten kinds of *Kalpavṛikshas*—मद्यांग वृक्ष, तूर्यांग वृक्ष, भूषणांगवृक्ष, ज्योतिवृक्ष, (self-luminous tree), गृहवृक्ष, भाजनांगवृक्ष, (for utensils), दीपांगवृक्ष (producing different lights), वस्त्रांगवृक्ष, भोजनांगवृक्ष, मालांगवृक्ष[1]. These idealised the ten kinds of highest pleasures (दशविधमहाभोग). It was, of course, a later elaboration of the original idea. The Bhāgavatas conceived of the *Kalpavṛiksha* as the tree of heaven and elaborated the theme in the story of the पारिजात flower which Kṛishṇa at the request of Satyabhāmā wrested from Indra and planted it on earth to propitiate the presiding genius of each home in the form of his own consort Lakshmī or Satyabhāmā. We may thus see that the Bharhut Stūpa and similar to it that of Sanchi form part of an essential Indian idiom long accepted by the common man for whom these monuments were raised. The *Mithuna* symbol and the *Śrīvṛiksha* symbol travelled from the Stūpa to the Brāhmanical temple. The *Śrīvṛiksha* became a sign or the abbreviated symbol of Śrī Lakshmi, Goddess of Abundance, Prosperity and Fertility for which the *Kalpavṛiksha* of Uttarakuru stood as an all embracing sign.

Another important motif of art, literature and cult handed down from pre-Buddhist times was that of the Yaksha (महद् यक्षम्) who moves on the surface of Waters and is stirred by Heat. In the Ṛigveda itself the idea of Yaksha was quite well known. It appears from the several references that Yaksha was considered to be a wonderful or mysterious being (न यासु चित्रं ददृशे न यक्षम्, ऋ० ७।६१।५); that it was a cult of the common folk and not of the developed minds (अमूराविश्वा, ऋ० ७।६१।५); that the Yaksha should not possess the body of the worshipper (ऋ० ७।६१।५); that there existed special places for the worship of Yakshas known as *Yaksha- sadam* (मा कस्य यक्ष सदमिद्धुरो गा मा वेश्म प्रमिनतो मापेः, ऋ ०४।३।१३). Agni, the Great God is spoken of as lord of Yaksha (यक्षस्याध्यक्षं तविषं बृहन्तम्, ऋ० १०। ८८।१३). In one place the Yaksha is referred to as having a beautiful form (यक्षदृशो न शुभयन्त मर्याः, ऋ ७।५६।१६). This idea of Yaksha or Yakshī being a model of beauty is much cherished in literature and inspired their representation in the art of Bharhut (*Figs 50-53*) and Sanchi as well as in Mathurā, Amarāvatī and elsewhere. The youthful handsome figure or a young student is compared to that of a beautiful Yaksha pleasing to the eye (यक्षं इव चक्षुषा प्रियो वा भूयासम्, गोभिलगृह्यसूत्र, ३।४।२८ मन्त्रब्राह्मण, १।७।१४; द्राह्यायण गृह्यसूत्र, ३।१।२५). This belief in the benevolent Yakshas became a dominant feature of Yaksha worship who were invoked for wealth, prosperity, beauty and all kinds of good things. In the classical age Yaksha worship captured the imagination of the people.

[1] तुरियंग भोयणंगा विहूसणंगा भयंग वत्थंगा। गिह जोइ दीवियंगा भायण मल्लंग कप्पदुमा॥
(पउमचरिय of विमलसूरी ३।३।७, also वसुनन्दि, श्रावकाचार, श्लोक २५१)

The Mahābhārata speaks of the Yaksha as having a huge body, a tall stature and radiant form, towering like a mountain and death-conquering (because of the flask of nectar held in his hands) :—

विरूपाक्षं महाकायं यक्षं तालसमुच्छ्रयम्, ज्वलनार्कप्रतीकाशमधृष्यं पर्वतोपमम् ।
सेतुमाश्रित्य तिष्ठन्तं ददर्श भरतर्षभ, मेघगंभीरया वाचा तर्जयन्तं महाबलम् ॥
(आरण्यकपर्व, २९७।२०)

The colossal and massive Yakshas from Parkham (*Fig. 37*), Besangar, Shishupālgarh and other places offer a commentary on the iconography as given here. Their shrines were sited mostly near ponds or pools of water (cf. सलिलस्य पृष्ठे in अथर्ववेद १०।७।९८, same as सेतुमाश्रित्य तिष्ठन्तम् of the आरण्यकपर्व). Many of Yaksha images have been found near water reservoirs. The symbolism was that Agni, the Son of Waters (अपां नपात्) was symbolised by Yaksha, who was a mysterious being (the epithet अद्भुत being applied both to Agni and a Yaksha), and both being conceived of as towering pillars of light (ज्वलनार्कप्रतीकाशम्, आरण्यकपर्व, २९७।२०). Just as Agni appears on the surface of waters so is Yaksha. An earlier conception about Yaksha was that of his huge body (आत्मन् वद् यक्ष, अथर्व० १०।२।३२). This is confirmed by the independent Yaksha statues as well as by their representations at Bharhut which iconographically are beautiful and of big size.

The Yaksha in the Atharvaveda is also called Brahma (ब्रह्म), and *Yaksha-Sadana* or *Yaksha-Veśma* was also known as *Brahmapura* (ब्रह्मपुर, अथर्व०, १०।८।२९–३०; शान्तिपर्व, १७१।५२).

An epithet of *Yakshapura* is *Aparājita* (अथर्व, १०।२।३३), the same as अमृतेनावृत (अथर्व, १०।२।२९) and *Avadhya* (शान्तिपर्व, १७१।५२). This is exactly what the popular belief about the Yakshas was, viz. that they had the power of averting death and bestowing immortal life on their worshippers. The symbol of their deathless nature (अमृत, अवध्य, अधृष्य) was the nectar flask held in the left hand of Yaksha images.

The popularity of Yaksha cult was very wide. We find both *Yaksha Maha* and *Brahma Maha* in the list of popular religious festivals which formed part of the cult worship in ancient India. Many such cults were known. For example, Indra Maha, Chanda Maha, Khanda (Skanda) Maha, Rudra Maha, Maunda (Mukunda) Maha, Siva Maha, Vessamaṇa Maha, Jakkha Maha, Bhūya (Bhūta) Maha, Naī (Nadī) Maha, Talāya Maha (same as Agaḍa or Avaṭa Maha), Rukkha Maha, Cheiya Maha, Pavvaya (Parvata) Maha, Ujjāna Maha, Giri Maha, Thūba Maha, Dari Maha, Sāgara Maha, Dhanur Maha , Kāma Maha, Brahma Maha, Ajjā (Āryā) Maha, Koṭṭakiriyā (Koṭṭavī Devī, a south Indian form of the Great Mother) Maha, Gaṅgā Maha (being a form of Nadī Maha), Raivataka Maha (being a form of Giri Maha, Ādiparva, Poona, 211.2) etc. The long list of these obscure but popular cults provides the background against which the popular religious scenes and images depicted on the Bharhut Stūpa specially may be studied. This also throws light on the reason why the builders of the

Stūpa gave such wide welcome to the cult of Yakshas, Nāgas, Trees, Chaityas etc. As a matter of fact the Stūpa worship was one of this divine fraternity, a part of the extensive pantheon universally accepted and adored. Just as in the later temples any one of the main deities enshrined in the sanctum had the other gods and goddesses amongst his *Parivāra Devatās*, similarly the Stūpa cult gave free admittance to the other folk deities as parts of its *Vyūha*. This concord amongst the cults or deities had been a conspicuous feature of popular religion throughout the ages and was so even in the time of the Buddha and Mahāvīra. What Aśoka officially did was to initiate a mingling of these cults with Buddhism. This seems to be the intention of the perplexing words used in his Edicts—

अमिसा देवा हुसु ते दानी मिसा कटा

(Minor Rock-edict 1)

Fig. 50.
Kupiro Yakho

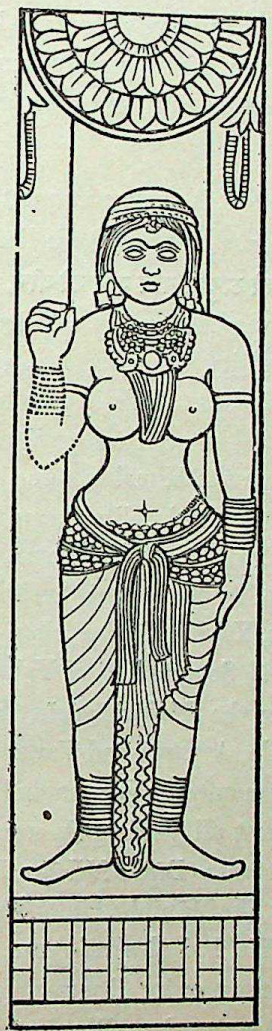

Fig. 51.
Sirimā Devatā

Fig. 52.
Supavaso Yakho

The deities of cults that at one time were excluded from or unmingled with (Buddhism), became now mingled under the new policy of the Emperor initiated in the form of धमपलिपुछा with the common man (जानपदसा जनसा दसने धंमनुसथि चा धमपलिपुछा, Rock-edict VIII, Kālsi). Aśoka realised the fact if Buddhism was to come to the people it must come through their idiom, language and cult form. The sculptors of Bharhut and Sanchi were working with the joyful visage of this new dictom. The mighty Stūpas raising their lofty heads to sky are eloquent with the voice of the people as the numerous religious scenes on them fully testify. Even the Jātaka stories depicted at Bharhut are folk tales which had hardly any true connection with the life of the Buddha as approved by the priests. These are all concessions to folk beliefs and the simple tales are of deliberate choice as alphabets of a popular level, e.g. Baka Jātaka, Miga J., Nāga J., Latuwā J., Kuruṅga Miga J., Kinnara J., Biḍāla J., Kukkuṭa J., Gaja-Sasa J., etc. These petty nursery tales have no place in the later Stūpas of Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍā etc. where grand themes as those of Vessantara and Māndhātā were given an honorable place as edifying tales of Buddha's spiritual preparation in previous lives.

How many were the Yakshas, is a relevant question. The representations at Bharhut give a correct indication. In Banaras there is the belief that each village has its Yaksha or *Bīr*, as they now call it (cf. गाँव गाँव को ठाकुर, गाँव गाँव को बीर, a saying that I heard from a villager). This seems to be right, for almost every village has a Yaksha platform. Four such Yakshas are still in worship in the Hindu University and several others in the city, like Lahurā Bīr, Bullā Bīr, i.e., the small and the big Yakshas. This is parallel to the Chullakokā and Mahākokā Devatās of Bharhut. Yaksha worship even today is a prevaling cult amongst the people from Bengal to Saurāshṭra and from the Himalayas to the Tamil land under several names as *Bīr*, *Jākha*, *Yakas* etc. At one time each locality seems to have had its Yaksha, e.g. Śākyavardhana of Kapilavastu, Puragā Yakshī of Pāṭaliputra, Māṇibhadra of Pawāyā, Avantisundarī Yakshī of Ujjayinī, Puṇṇabhadda of Champā, Suchiloma of Gayā (represented at Bharhut, referred to in the *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, Yakkha Suttas, chap. X), Arantuka-Tarantuka and Yakkhī Ulūkhala Mekhalā of Kurukshetra. Several lists of Yakshas are available, the most important being that of the local Yakshas in the *Mahāmāyūrī*. Pāṇini also had mentioned the names of four Yakshas, viz. Supari, Viśāla, Aryamā and Varuṇa (अष्टा० ५।३।८४) after whom childern were named by the parents. The names of Varuṇa and Aryamā in this brief list should not surprise us since at one time almost all Vedic gods were robed in the list of Yaksha deities. For example, in the Āṭānāṭīya Suttanta (*Dīgha Nikāya*, III. 195), Indra, Sūrya, Varuṇa, Prajāpati are said to have been Yakshas like Māṇibhadda. One of them, viz. Viśāla was the Yaksha, who gave his name to Vaiśāli. We find also reference to a Trimuka Yaksha worshipped at Banaras. Thus almost every big town or locality was carrying on with its Yaksha cult. The names of the Yakshas and Yakshīs found at Bharhut with lables engraved on them should be understood as folk deities of a local character. We know these since the short epigraphs say so, otherwise their statues on the rails and gateways would have remained unidentified

as is the case with so many Yaksha figures at Sanchi and also in other places. The names of Yakshas and kindred local deities are as follows :—

सुपवसो यखो, विरुढ़को यखो, गंगित यखो, सुचिलोमो यखो, कुपिरो यखो, अजकालको यखो, सुदसना यखी, चदा (चंदा) यखी, सिरिमा देवता, चुलकोका देवता, महाकोका देवता।

Of the above list Supavasa (*Fig. 52*), was once taken as Suprāvṛisha deity of plentyful rainfall, but Barua derives it from Supravāsa, auspicious deity for travellers. Viruḍhako, Kupiro (*Fig. 50*) (Viruḍhaka and Kubera), are two of the Chātūmahārājika gods, viz. Regents of the four quarters, the other two being Dhṛitarāshṭra and Virūpāksha, the four in order being kings of the Kumbhāṇḍas, Yakshas, Gandharvas and Nāgas. Usually, Kubera alone is considered to be the king of Yakshas but here Viruḍhaka also is labelled as Yaksha. Kubera belongs to north, Dṛitarāshṭra to east, Virūḍhaka to south, Virūpāksha to east. Gaṁgita is an unfamiliar name. But in the Sabhāparva (11.42) we read of a Goddess Gāṁgatā which appears to be synonymous with the Earth Goddess. Probably its male counterpart was worshipped as Gaṁgita Yaksha. The name of Suchiloma Yaksha appears in the *Saṁyutta Nikāya* and *Sutta Nipāta* and he is said to be worshipped on a platform in Gayā. Ajakālaka, as the name implies, seems to be a bucolic divinity associated with goatherds. A statuette of a Goat-bearing Yaksha has been found at Mathura. Sudasanā Yakshī, i.e. the Yakshī of the beautiful form, reminds of the strong literary tradition that Yakshīs were considered to be paragons of beauty. In the Vanaparva, Damayantī in the forest is asked, "Are you a Yakshī ?" Chadā Yakshī is clearly Chandrā, the Moon-Goddess conceived of as a Yakshī. Sirimā refers to goddess Śrī-Lakshmī, a popular deity worshipped as a type of the Mother Goddess. The pair names Chulakokā and Mohākokā, i.e. the junior and senior Kokā Goddesses must have been of the same kind as the two Yaksha names Lahurā Bīr and Bullā Bīr, still worshipped in Vārāṇasī where Lahurā means small and Bullā as derived from Sans. *Vipula*, Prā. *Viula*) denoted the bigger one. The word Kokā is of indefinite meaning, but occurs as early as Ṛigveda (VII. 104.22) where *Koka* as the pair word with *Śvā* (श्वायातुं कोकयातुम्) seems to signify an wolf (see for Pāli references and this meaning, Stede, *Pali Dictionary*). In the Gupta period also it was used as a word denoting wolf (कोकस्त्वीहामृगो वृकः, इत्यमरः २।५।७). Kokāmukhasvāmin and Varāhamukhasvāmin are two names of Vishṇu, but the meaning with reference to the two goddesses is not so clear excepting that they were considered to be local deities of a cult probably devoted to hunting as taken by Dr. Barua.

Next to Yaksha, or perhaps equally strong and ancient, was the cult of the Nāga, for which abundant evidence is available throughout Vedic, Purāṇic, Buddhist and Jaina literatures, and also in the country-wide folklore and forms of popular worship devoted to Nāga deities. The many-sided material from both literature and art has been brought together in Dr. Vogel's *Indian Serpent Lore* and also was early propounded (in 1868) by James Fergusson in his *Tree and Serpent Worship*. It appears that the religious atmosphere round about

Bharhut as a central place on the route of popular travel was saturated with elements of Nāga worship which have found a due place in the art of the Mahāstūpa. Elāpatra, king of the Nāgas, pays his homage to the Buddha in a very graphic scene (*Fig. 54*) (एरापतो नागराजा भगवतो व (˙) दते). Another Nāga at Bharhut is Chakavāko, a name apparently of local significance.

The Nāga motif appears to go hand in hand with Yaksha. Both have their source in the Vedic tradition and in the local cults. There is a Nāga or Ahi serpent in the legend of Indra, viz. Vṛitra whose conflict with Indra forms the main plank of the great myth in the Ṛigveda. There is the Nāga Muchalinda as an important motif in Buddha's life and similarly a Nāga in the life of Mahāvīra, Kṛishṇa and also in the religious conception of Mahādeva Śiva. These are all pointers to a metaphysical pattern based on the eternal conflict of light and darkness, of good and evil, of the celestial powers and the chthonic spirits, Suparṇa and Nāga, or as the Brāhmaṇas mention the feud between Sauparṇeyas and Kādravyas. Here also we may point in short that the Yaksha stand for the immortal elixir of life (यक्षत्वममरत्वं च, वाल्मी० रामा० ३. ११. ९४), and the Nāga for poison symbolising the principle of death ; but just as the Yakshas are both good and evil similarly the Nāgas also may be of benign character and worthy of worship as Devatā. This is possible when they are under the control or influence of a deity as Indra, Śiva etc. The same motif was assimilated in Buddhism as part of the Buddha's life and that takes the form of the Nāga paying homage to the Buddha.

The worship of the Tree (वृक्ष मह) was also of equal popularity and its place in higher religion was admitted from the earliest times when Brahman himself was spoken of as the Forest, the Tree (ब्रह्म तद्वनं स उ वृक्ष आस, तैत्तिरीय ब्राह्मण, २. ८. ९६; see also Ṛigveda, X.81.4). The religious masters at Bharhut accepted the Tree cult but in the context of the Bodhi Tree of the Seven Mānushī Buddhas.

The Stūpa of Bharhut was 67′ 8½″ in diameter at the base but only a very small portion was left when Cunningham visited it, viz. 10′ in length and 6′ in height. This portion was on the south east-side and contained rows of small recesses (13½″ broad at top, 4½″ at bottom and 8½″ to 9″ apart) for lights of which the number for whole of the Stūpa seems to have been about 120 for 600 lights in each row. The whole Stūpa was built of plain bricks of 12″×12″ size, some large ones being 5″ to 6″ thick. The height of the Stūpa could not be ascertained but its form with the dome and the *Harmikā* can be made out from the several replicas engraved in relief on railings. The orginal Stūpa was made of plain bricks and stood on a strong foundation of solid stone-blocks. Round the Stūpa on the ground floor stood the magnificant inner railing consisting of four quadrants and four gateways facing the cardinal points. The *Pradakshiṇā-patha* between the Stūpa and railing had a terrace 10′ 4″ wide. In all there were eighty upright pillars each 7′ 1″ in height with a coping on the top (7′ in length, 1′ 10″ in height, 1′ 8″ in width, total length of the copings 330′) raising the height of the railing to about 9′. Between each pair of the uprights were fixed three cross-bars (सूची) (1′ 11¼″ in length, 1′ 10½″

Closeup of the Yakshi. From Bharhut Rail-pillar.

Fig. 53. Chulakokā Devatā

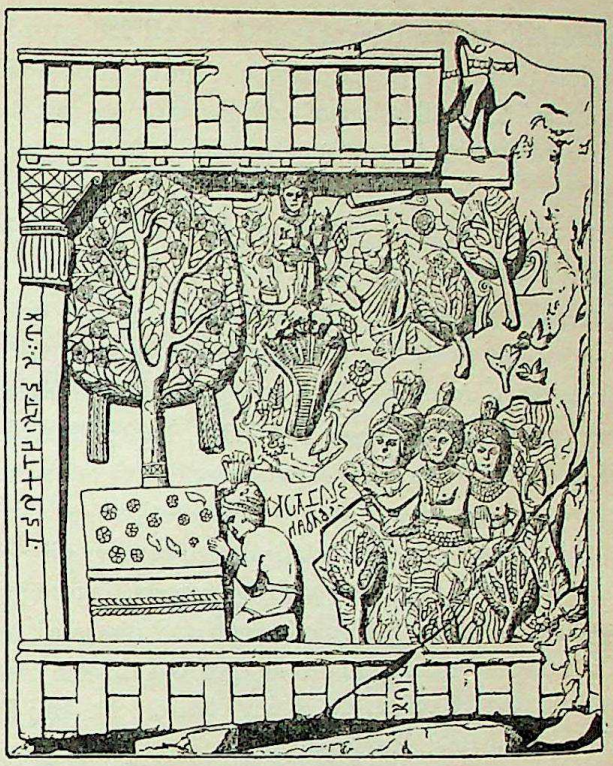

Fig. 54. Erāpata Nāgarāja;

Firstly the five-hooded Nāgarāja is shown in his natural form; then in the right corner accompanied by his queen and daughter; and lastly kneeling down and paying homage to Bodhi Tree.

Fig. 55. Medallion Male Bust (Bharhut)

Fig. 56. Medallion Female Bust (Bharhut)

in breadth, with a thickness of 6″ ; in all 228 cross-bars). There were sixteen pillars in each quarter portion of the railing with four additional pillars in the return-screen in front of each gateway. The tall pillars of each gateway rose to a height of 9′ 7½″ ; those on the east and west sides were comprised of four octagonal shafts standing together, while those on the north and south gatways square in form. These pillars supported an imposing superstructure of three parallel architraves separated from each other by square stone blocks, and the horizontal space between each pair of carved beams was filled by smaller pillars. A particular feature of the *Toraṇa* beams at Bharhut consists in the open-mouthed crocodile figures with curved tails occupying the projecting ends. It was on the account that the *Toraṇa* itself received the name *Śiṁśumāra Śiraḥ,* as given in the Mahābhārata (Ādi Parva I, 176.15 ; see my articles, Śiṁśumāra Śiraḥ, *J.I.S.O.A*, 1939 ; Mahābhārata Notes, *A.B.O.I.* Vol. XXVI, pts, III-IV, pp. 283-86). The topmost architrave was surmounted by a conspicuous Dharmachakra supported on a base of honey-suckle design and this was on the two sides at the uppermost height of the vertical pillars flanked by two smaller *triratna* symbols. Cunningham was able to restore these pinnacle symbols from existing fragments. The detailed architectural scheme has been described by Cunningham and discussed by Barua. Cunningham found 49 pillars of the original railing, 35 on the spot and 12 from the neighbouring villages of Batanmara and Pataora and 16 out of 40 coping stones. Pt. Brij Mohan Vyās has added to the collection of the Allahabad Municipal Museum 44 pieces from the Bharhut Toraṇa Vedikā. "They included 32 pillars, 1 corner pillar with a front and side face, 3 cross-bars, 14 coping stones, 1 fragment of a capital, 2 other blocks and a stair-way.[1]

The building of the four gateways with triple horizontal beams must have received minute attention from the architects of the Stūpa, for these monuments bear witness not only to the lasting strength of the stony framework, as testified by standing structures at Sanchi, but also bespeak of the artistic charm by their harmonious scheme of the several elements and also by the detailed and minute decoration which is precise, meaningful and informed with much vitality. There is marked degree of restraint in the carvings producing the impression that the sculptors were brought up in a long tradition of such work irrespective of the medium in which they were required to work.

The scheme of decorative motifs and illustrative themes must have been prepared after much careful thinking so as to evolve a rare synthesis between Buddhist subjects on the one hand and folk-cults on the other. The result is a perfect accomplishment and harmony in which both of them get their due and impartial share. The Bharhut Mahāstūpa is our earliest monument of its type being raised about the middle of the second century B.C. in the time of the king Dhanabhūti of Sunga dynasty and deserves to be studied for its architectural planning, art-style and themes as well as the decorations with which it is richly embellished.

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[1] S. C. Kala, *Bharhut Vedikā,* p, 14.

11. PRĀKĀRAVAPRA KUṆḌALA

In the Virāṭa Parvan 10.1 (Critical Edition) occurs the following verse :

अथापरोऽदृश्यत रूपसंपदा स्त्रीणामलंकारधरो बृहत्पुमान् ।
प्राकारवप्रे प्रतिमुच्य कुण्डले दीर्घे च कम्बू परिहाटके शुभे ॥

Arjuna as Bṛihannaḍā appears in female disguise wearing ornaments which consisted of a pair of *kuṇḍalas* and a pair of beautiful golden bracelets. The phrase *prākāra-vapra* qualifying *kuṇḍala* appears to have presented much difficulty. Amongst the variant readings we find that the only Kashmiri manuscript written in Śāradā characters available for this Parva substitutes प्राकारवक्षः for प्राकारवप्रे, but it stands alone in this reading, which appears to be an emendation of the original knotty text. The redactor perhaps ingeniously thought that प्राकार and वप्र being synonyms, one of them was superfluous ; and since प्राकार does lend itself as a suitable उपमान for a hero's ideal chest, the correction naturally suggested itself. The three Devanāgarī manuscripts (DI-3) got rid of the difficulty by changing the text to स्थित्वा च वप्रे, which conveys little sense in the present context. It should be mentioned, however, that the remaining nine Devanāgarī manuscripts collated for the Critical Edition faithfully adhere to the old text tradition by retaining प्राकारवप्रे, although its satisfactory explanation may not have been grasped. The South Indian recensions, evidently to obviate the difficulty of suitably explaining प्राकारवप्रे, changed it to प्रवालचित्रे, which is of poor value from the point of view of an original reading. The learned Editor of the Critical Edition of the Virāṭa Parvan must be congratulated for retaining प्राकारवप्रे as the traditional text, although he does so with a wavy underline. This reading, besides respecting the overwhelming testimony of the manuscripts is by far the best and the happiest for illuminating the verse with an original beautiful meaning.

The term प्राकारवप्रे as the qualifying epithet of an ear ornament was used in a technical sense as the name of a particular kind of *kuṇḍalas*. This type of *kuṇḍala* is common in the ears of the male and the female figures at Bharhut (*Fig. 57*) and Sanchi and in other places where specimens of early Indian art are preserved. This ornament consists of a prominent square plaque seen in front of the ear, to which a projection with two spiral turns is attached at the back and worn in the earlobe. Its front portion is adorned with the design of a four-petalled flower.Clear examples of such ear ornaments (*Fig. 58*) can be seen in Cunnin-

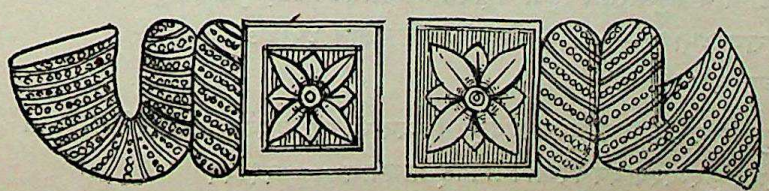

Fig. 57. Prākāravapra Kuṇḍala

Fig. 58. Prākāravapra Kuṇḍala

gham's *Bharhut*, plate XXII showing the *Yakshas*, *Kubera* and *Suciloma* and the *Yaksī Chandā*, and plate XXIII illustrating *Sirimā Devatā*, *Chulakokā Devatā* (*Fig. 53*) and the *Yakshiṇī Sudasanā*, the last named figure showing the *kuṇḍala* and its arrangment in the ear quite distinctly. A pair of such *kuṇḍalas* is also shown separately inside a *Kalpalatā* meander[1] at Bharhut and is illustrated on plate XLVIII, fig. E. 8 of Cunningham's book. Cunningham has also reproduced an enlarged sketch of the same on plate XLIX, figs. 13, 14. A beautiful male head shown inside a full blown rosette illustrates the same type of ear ornament (*Bharhut*, plate XXIV. fig. 1).

These figures are datable in the 2nd century B. C. A still older statue of a colossal Yaksha from Parkham (Mathura Museum) also shows this feature. It is also noteworthy that this kind of ear ornament *prākāra-varpa kuṇḍala* is not met with in Indian art after the Sunga period. In the sculptures of the Kushāṇa period the *kuṇḍalas* generally assume the form of pendants ; more or less cylindrical in shape. The fashions changed again during the Gupta period when we find in sculpture and painting ear-rings of heavy discular shape resembling a wheel, which Kālidāsa has referred to in the *Kumārasambhava* (IX. 23) as *tāṭaṅkachakra* (रथस्य कर्णाविभि तन्मुखस्य ताटङ्कचक्रद्वितयं न्यधात्सः ।), with which Śiva adorned the ears of his beloved consort Pārvatī. Another kind of ear-rings in vogue in the Gupta period was the *makara-kuṇḍala*.

Literary descriptions are generally illustrated in the art specimens of each age, and if properly understood and correlated with the preserved examples of sculpture, painting and terracotta may prove valuable for providing chronological data. The epithet *prākāra-vapra* in relation to *kuṇḍala* implies a comparison between the abrupt height of the rampart or city-wall (*prākāra*) and the cubical front portion of the ear ornament as seen on the oldest

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[1] The motif of the *Kalpalatā* or *Kalpavṛiksha* producing various ornaments *ābharaṇas* or *bhūshaṇa-vikalpa* is an ancient conception referred to in the Rāmāyaṇa (Kishkindhā, 43. 45), Mahā-vāṇija Jātaka (Vol. IV. p. 352), Meghadūta (II. 11). For other examples of *Prākāra-vapra kuṇḍala* issuing from Kalpalatā bends shown at Bharhut, see Plate XL-A-B. 3, XLI-B. C. 6, XLII-C.E. 2. XLV-E. 3, XLVIII-E. 5 and E. 8 of Cunningham's *Bharhut*.

उत्तरकुरुवर्णन, भीष्मपर्व ७।२-१२

सर्वकामफलास्तत्र केचिद्वृक्षा जनाधिप । अपरे क्षीरिणो नाम वृक्षास्तत्रनराधिप ॥४॥
ये क्षरन्ति सदा क्षीरं षड्रसं चामृतोपमम् । वस्त्राणि च प्रसूयन्ते फलेष्वाभरणानि च ॥५॥
.....। मिथुनानि च जायन्ते स्त्रियश्चाप्सरसोपमाः ॥८॥
भारुण्डा नाम शकुनास्तीक्ष्णतुंडा महाबलाः । तान्निर्डरन्तीह मृतान्दरीषु प्रक्षिपन्ति च ॥१२॥

वायुपुराण ४५।११–५० । मिथुनं जायते वृक्षात् ४५।४७ ।

अयोध्या ९१।१९

वनं कुरुष्व यद्दिव्य वासोभूषणपत्रवत् । दिव्यनारी फलं शश्वत् तत्कौबेरमिहैव तु ॥
उत्तरेभ्यः कुरुभ्यश्च वनं दिव्योपभोगवत् आजगाम·····९१।३१

statues in India. Some of the city-walls incidentally shown in sculpture possess a coping decorated with a band of four-petalled flowers exactly similar to that decorating the *kuṇḍalas*. This can be seen in the representation of the city of Banaras at Amarāvatī illustrated by Dr. Coomaraswamy in his *Early Indian Architecture*, I Cities and Citygates, Fig. 13.

In ancient architecture the *prākāra* and *vapra* go together. As stated by Dr. Coomaraswamy, "On the city side of the moat rises the wall (*pākāra*, Skt. *prākāra*), from a foundation or plinth (*vapra*)". [Ibid. p. 213]. In the same place he says that *vapra* and *prākāra* are sometimes treated as synonyms (Acharya, *Dictionary of Hindu Architecture*, 534), but in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra we have वप्रस्योपरि प्राकारम् i.e., the *prākāra* (wall) was raised on the *vapra* (plinth).[1] Dr. Otto Stein has also observed that the texts and the respective descriptions in literature are not always strict in distinguishing the *vapra* and *prākāra* (Arthaśāstra and Śilpaśāstra, *Archiv Orientalni*, Vol. 7, p. 483).

Some specialised investigation is needed to arrive at the exact significance of the two words in earlier and later literatures. But it appears that the distinction in their meaning was later on missed and the two began to be treated as synonyms. In the compound phrase *prākāra-vapra*, *Vapra* seems to resemble the spiral attachment and *prākāra* the cubical block portion of the heavy *kuṇḍalas* familiar to us in the sculptures of the Maurya and Sunga periods.

It may be noted that the word *parihāṭaka* is used twice to qualify *kambu* or a pair of bracelets, which must have been made of gold (Virāṭa, 10.1,5); and again twice to describe the *kuṇḍalas* worn by Arjuna (Virāṭa, 15.2; 18-19). The expression परिहाटके कुण्डले of the Mahābhārata reminds us of the graphic reference to such *kuṇḍalas* by Patañjali as खदिराङ्गारसवर्णे कुण्डले (Mahābhāshya ed. Kielhorn, Vol. I, p. 7) and by Manu as शुभे रौक्मे च कुण्डले (IV. 36).

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[1] c.f. also वप्र=(१) प्राकार (२) प्राकारमूल। अस्त्री क्षेत्रे वास्तुभूमौ प्राकारे सानुरोधसोः। प्राकारमूलके त्वाह वैजयन्त्या पुमांस्त्वसौ। नानार्थार्णव संक्षेप १।११७०

12. ŚIṂŚUMĀRA—ŚIRAḤ

In the Draupadī-svayaṁvara Parva of the *Mahābhārata*, Ādi Parva[1], we find the following śloka :

ततः पौरजनाः सर्वे सागरोद्भूतनिःस्वनाः । शिशुमारपुरं प्राप्य न्यविशंस्ते च पार्थिवाः ॥

I, 176.15.

The variant readings found in the foot-note to this verse are : K_4 D_4 S *śiṁ* (G_5śi) *śumāra-giriṁ* (K_4 '°*śiraṁ*' ; D_4, °*śiraḥ*').

Thus we have two other readings, viz., '*siṁśumāra-giriṁ*' and *śiraḥ*' from the Mss. The reading in all the printed editions of the Vulgate text is '*śiṁśumāra-śiraḥ*. The *Kumbakonam edition* (Ch. 200. 24) also confirms it. We have therefore to examine the original reading as to whether it was '*śiraḥ*', '*puraṁ*', or '*giriṁ*'.

It seems as if '*giriṁ*' and '*puraṁ*' were readings better suited for an intelligible meaning. Dr. Sukthankar kindly informed me that he preferred '*śiśumāra-puraṁ*' and considered it to be the name of some locality where the 'samāja-vāṭa' for Draupadī's 'svayaṁvara' was built ; it may have been in the vicinity of the capital of Drupada. The other reading '*śiṁśumāra-giriṁ*' appears to be the attempt of some puzzled copyist or commentator, who could make little sense out of '*śiṁśumāra-śiraḥ*' and so cut the Gordian knot by changing '*śiraḥ*' into '*puraṁ*. But such an emendation of the text due to lack of understanding of its meaning cannot be justified.

We, therefore, submit that the reading '*śiṁśumāra-śiraḥ*' as preserved in the Vulgate is correct. '*Śiṁśumāra-śiraḥ*' has been used as a synonym for '*makara-toraṇa*', the well known motif of the ancient gateways in Indian architecture. The verse says : "The citizens clamorous like the surging sea, as well as the other kings approached the *śiṁśumāra-śiraḥ*' (the architrave of the gateway adorned with fish-tailed crocodile), and thence entered the arena".

'*Śiṁśumāra*' and '*makara*' are synonymous. The head of the fishtailed *Makara* occupied the ends of the architrave beams in early Indian art. There is no '*makara-toraṇa*' in any of the Sanchi gateways where only plain spiral volutes are found, but the superstructure of the three architraves of the Bharhut gateway (in the Indian Museum) shows all the twelve faces of the volute ends adorned with the '*makara*' motif represented with coiled fish-tail and a gaping mouth (*karāla-mukha*'). The school of Mathura also abounds in '*makara toraṇas*' In the fragments Nos. M. 2. and M. 7, for example, consisting of the end of a '*toraṇa*' architrave the curled-up fish-tail of the yawning crocodile follows the curved outline of the stone. (Vogel, *Catalogue of the Mathura Museum*). Many other specimens are preserved in the museums at Mathura and Lucknow.

[1] Published from the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, under the editorship of V. S. Sukthankar.

The '*makara*' motif occurs in the art of the Sunga period and in the subsequent centuries down to the Kushāṇa epoch, roughly from the middle of the second century B.C. to the end of the second century A. D. The mention of the motif in this partilcuar passage of the *Mahābhārata* incidentally sheds light on the problem of its probable date. The literary tradition of the '*makara-toraṇa*' or *śiṁśumāra-śiraḥ*' antedates our knowledge of it in the lithic art of the Sunga period by several centuries ; it is believed that the patterns executed in stone were preceded by works in wood.

In October 1938 I had written to late Dr. V. S. Sukthankar to enquire the meaning of the expression शिशुमार शिरः occuring in *Ādiparvan*, 185.16 (Vulgate text). In reply he wrote to me : "I am not sure about the meaning of *Śiṁśumāra Śiraḥ*, in Ādi. 185.16, Our old group of Northern Mss. has '*puraṁ*' while Southern Mss, read '*giriṁ*'. We have accepted '*puraṁ*' for our critical text, and take that it was some place—a suburb—near Drupada's capital, where a special camp was erected for the *Svayaṁvara*". Subsequently, I published my interpretation of the word in the Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Art for 1939, suggesting that शिशुमार शिरः could best be explained as an architectural term implying the architrave of a *Toraṇa* carved with an alligator's head. The meaning had come to me by looking at the old gateways of the Sanchi Stūpa in which the *toraṇa* beams are finished off in volutes at both ends decorated with alligator's head and coiled fish tail. This meaning suits the context admirably. In response to king Drupada's proclamation of the *Svayaṁvara*, many Kings, Ṛishis, sages and Brāhmaṇas flocked to his capital from different places to participate in and witness the ceremony. Those kings were well received by Drupada with respect due to their rank (Ādi. 176.14). Then we have—

ततः पौरजनाः सर्वे सागरोद्धूतनिःस्वनाः । शिशुमारपुरं प्राप्य न्यविशंस्ते च पार्थिवाः ॥

(Critical Text, 1.176.15)

i.e. on the next day the citizens of the capital and those royal guests proceeded with rumbling deep noise to the शिशुमार शिरः (keeping the Vulgate reading) and entered (the समाजवाट).

Then the poet describes in elaborate detail the architecture of the *samāja-vāṭa* furnished with प्राकार and परिखा, i.e. first a moat then an outer wall, and then the द्वारतोरण or the main gateway in the enclosure wall which gave access to the inner grounds. Inside it were rich pavilions and palaces (वितान, प्रासाद) furnished with many articles of comfort and show (Ādi, 176. 16-93). The Epic description faithfully reflects the early Indian architecture of cities and city-gates as found in many places in the Buddhist and Jaina literature (cf. *Milinda Pañha*, 1.34 and 380 ff.). As Dr. Coomaraswamy has shown. : the most conspicuous and necessary parts of a city are the moat (*Parikhā*) and rampast (prākāra), gates (*dvāra, gopura*), more specifically gate-houses (*dvāra-koṭṭhaka*) with their defence towers (*dvāra-aṭṭālaka*) and the king's palace (*prāsāda, harmya, raja-niveśana, Vimāna*, etc.). [Early Indian Architecture, Cities and City-gates, *Eastern Art*, 1930, p. 211].

[1] Letter No. Gen. 3494 of 1938-1939, dated 5/11/1938.

The Epic writer has in my opinion preserved in the word शिशुमार शिरः a conspicuous feature of the early Indian gateway architecture. The voluted ends of the architraves or temple cross-beams were adorned with figures of fish-tailed alligators in a very attractive and prominent style. This feature impressing even a casual observer of the Sanchi gateways persists upto the Kushāṇa period in the art of Mathura. It should, however be mentioned that this artistic feature which is so very common in the style of the Sanchi *Toraṇas* is conspicuous by its absence at Bharhut where only the spiral motifs are carve on the two ends of the beams. I should also note that I am unable to quote any other evidence from early Jaina or Buddhist literature to corroborate the above explanation which can, therefore, be taken at best a suggestion deriving its force from the evidence of available architectural styles of early Indian art.

Dr. Sukthankar referred my suggestion to Dr. P. K. Acharya whose explanation was a bit different from mine as Dr. Sukthankar wrote to me : "I have been pursuing the question of the best interpretation of the word *śiṁśumāra śiraḥ*, and in that connection I wrote to Prof. P. K. Acharya of Allahabad University. I have now heard from him that he prefers the reading *Śiraḥ*, and opines that it is an architectural term. In his opinion it means *not* architrave of gates, but "the hand-rail on the balustrade of the gallery of pavilion marked probably at the bottom by the head of crocodile". This gallery of pavilion, in his opinion, was probably reserved for the *Paurajanāḥ*. He refers me to Mānasāra Vāstuśāstra (30-78-80) where there is mention of "stair-case of elephant's trunk pattern said to be decorated with lion faces".

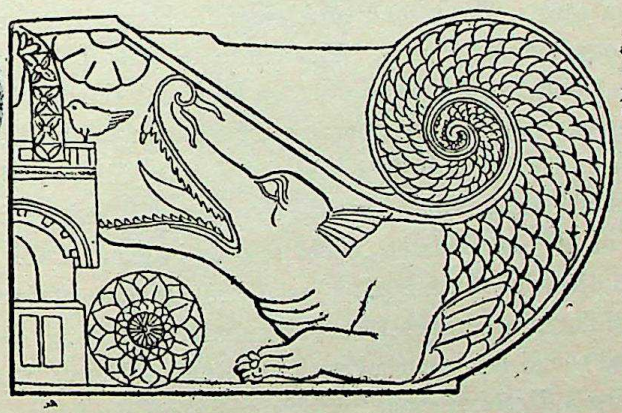
I am sending you the information for what is worth. I cannot make much of it myself. But it might give you a clue for further investigation".[1]

Although I cannot agree with the suggestion of Dr. Acharya I think we can understand his meaning. He seems to suggest that in the pavilion (विमान) inside the समाजवाट there were seats for the kings on the ground floor and an upper gallery for the sight-seeing पौरजनाः, to which a stair-case was leading. The hand-rail on the side of this stair-case was decorated with the head of crocodile, and this decoration was carved at the bottom near the first baluster or upright post. If I am right in understanding Dr. Acharya's meaning I should say that no doubt, there were upper galleries and stair-cases (cf. सुखारोहणसोपान in the present passage, Ādi, 176.20) with small hand-rails as found in the representations of early Indian art, yet I think that the term शिशुमार शिरः as applicable to this small baluster is, for one thing, of much weaker force than if applied to the full-fledged *toraṇa* architrave and for the other does not seem to hold good in the present context. A careful reading of the passage (Ādi 176.15-26) makes it quite clear. The शिशुमार शिरः according to the Epic was approached by the citizens and the kings and the question of any upper gallery being reserved for the former does not arise. The obvious and natural inference is that the शिशुमार शिरः (whatever be its

[1] Letter No. Mbh. 3528 of 1940-41 dated 9/10/1940.

meaning) was approached by the guests as the first thing before they made their entry into the arena.

Having accepted the reading शिशुमारशिरः to be the correct one as dictated by the propriety of meaning I had entertained doubts regarding its textual support since Dr. Sukthankar wrote to me ; our *old* group of Northern Mss. has '*puraṁ*', while Southern Mss. read '*giriṁ*', we have accepted '*puraṁ*', for our Critical text. In the printed footnotes to the Critical edition only M_5K_4 of the Kashmiri version gives शिशुमार शिर and D_4 of the Devanāgarī version शिशुमार शिरः, all others record पुरम् or गिरिम्, Besides the fact that feeble textual support is not always the find argument in rejecting an otherwise superior reading[1], we have here a good reason for the belief that शिशुमार शिरः represents the original reading. It is a very fit example of *lectico difficilior*, i.e. the more difficult text preserving the correct reading, which in process of simplification was substituted by a reading palpably easier of comprehension. But all doubt about it is now set at rest by the discovery of the oldest extant Ms. of the Ādiparvan from Nepal which according to Pt. Hemaraja is between seven hundred and eight hundred years old and which the learned general Editor of the Mahābhārata hailed as a discovery of capital importance of Mahābhārata Studies. The reading of this Ms. is शिशुमार शिर : (Sukthankar, Epic studies VII, Sukthankar Memorial Edition, Vol I. p. 282), and this to my mind sets the seal of final approval on this debated reading.



State Museum, Library, Lko.

Fig. 59. Śiṁśumāra—Śiraḥ-Bharhut

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[1] Compare the reading उपसृताः in Āraṇyaka Parvan, 229, 5. 'Vasudeva S. Agrawala has suggested the emendation of उपसृतांस्त्वपि (of the Vulgate) to उपसृतास्त्वपि (which is our reading) Though rather feebly supported by Ms. evidence, it is undoubtedly the correct reading.; (Dr. Sukthankar's Critical Notes to the Āraṇyaka Parvan, p. 1106).

13. A NEW YAKSHĪ IMAGE FROM MEHRAULI

This beautiful Yakshī image is stated to have been found during excavations near the Qutb Minar at Mehrauli in 1912. It remained deposited all these years in the Delhi Fort Museum as a Buddhist railing pillar No. A 29 ($2'6\frac{1}{2}'' \times 9\frac{1}{2}'' \times 8''$ carved face). It has now been shifted to the National Museum.

The sculpture (Fig. 60) shows a female figure standing under a tree and embracing the trunk of the tree with her left hand, in an attitude which suggests that she held a branch of the tree with the up-lifted right hand like a *Śālabhañjikā* figure. Unfortunately, the sculpture is damaged and a portion of the proper right side has vertically been cut away (Fig. 36). Similarly, the above portion showing the upraised hand and the foliage of the tree and the lower portion of the legs are lost.

The long braid of hair interwoven in two locks coming down to the girdle is shown falling on the side. Of a pair of simple ear-pendants the one in the right ear is damaged, and the face is badly mutilated. The figure is wearing a flat torque of which the details have been effaced, and three pendant necklaces. The one falling above the breasts has a clasp consisting of cylindrical beads separating two round human-faced plaques with a *nandipada* symbol pendant from each. The second necklace falls between the middle of the breasts and has a square plaque hanging from it. The third one falls below the breasts and has in the centre a prominent round *padaka* carved with a lotus. A thin double folded string passes below the breasts and a chain running from it connects with the broad girdle below to keep the latter in position. A thin richly decorated ribbon embroidered with pearl pattern on the two sides and a series of horned animal heads in the centre, is knotted in front of the girdle, with its loop falling on the left and the two loose ends in front of the legs. This charming device lends beauty to the whole figure. The broad girdle consists of six strings, the first, third and fifth of hexagonal fluted beads, the second and sixth of square beads with round ends and the fourth of flattened round beads carved with eight-petalled lotus flowers. The lower part of the figure is wearing a *dhotī* indicated by folds and a zig-zag fringe on the left thigh.

The original pillar was broader, but it was converted for subsequent use by cutting it on the proper right side veritcally across the shoulder down to the legs and making three morfice holes on each side. The upper protion accommodated the foliage of the tree under which the *Yakshī* was standing in *Śālabhañjikā* pose. The sculpture is made of buff coloured sandstone and is to be assigned to the second century B.C.

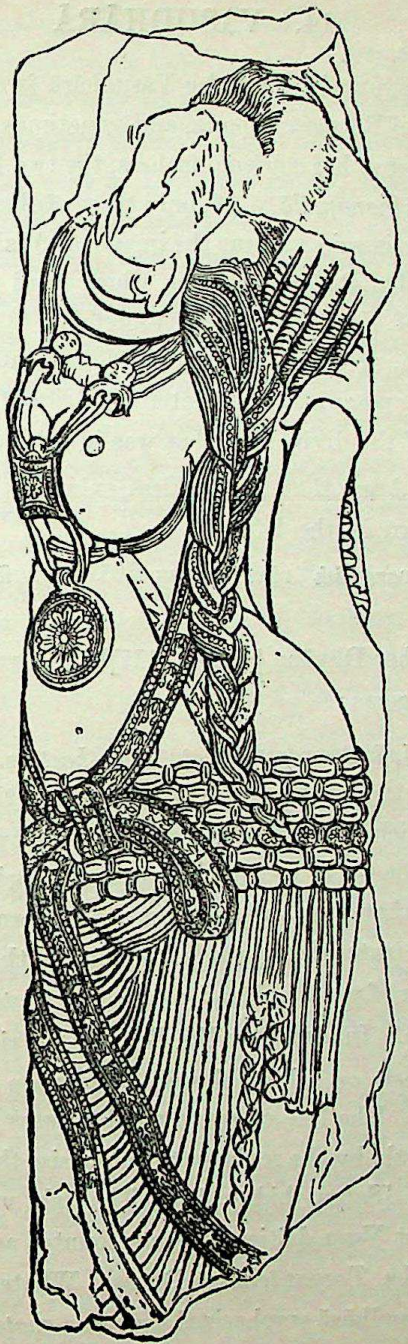

Fig. 60, Mehrauli Yakhhī Image

14. VASUDHĀRĀ

According to Mahāyāna iconography Vasudhārā is a consort of Jambhala. She is believed to be an emanation of Ratnasambhava, and sometimes of Akshobhya, but in sculpture she is more ancient than either of her spiritual fathers, the two Dhyānī Buddhas named above. According to a note in the *Sādhanamālā*, p. 89, only three sādhanas are devoted to her worship, and in one of these only she is said to bear the image of Akshobhya. In two others, she is assigned to the Dhyānī Buddha Ratnasambhava, which word means 'born of jewels'. Vasudhārā, literally 'custodian of *Vasus* or riches', found her appropriate male counterpart in Jambhala, the god of wealth, and both were made dependent for origination on Ratnasambhava, the latter event taking place at a much later date, since the incorporation of this Dhyānī Buddha into the pantheon of the divine Buddhas was in itself a subsequent accomplishment.

The Dhyāna lays down that the goddess exhibits the *varada mudrā* in the right hand and carries ears of corn in the left:

Dakshiṇa-kareṇa varadāṁ vāmakareṇa dhānya-mañjarīdharām.

[*Sādhanamālā*, p. 90ī]

According to another Dhyāna [*ibid*, p. 117][1] she carries on her left hand the ears of corn with vessel showering gems:

Dhānya-mañjarī-nānāratnavarsha-ghaṭa-vāma-hastām. In the images from Sarnath [B(f) 19—22] which belong to the late medieval period, we find the three distinguishing features as given in the Dhyāna; which shows that the sculpturs followed a genuine tradition. The right hand of the goddess is shown in the gift-bestowing attitude, and from the stalk beneath the left hand it is suggested that this hand held an ear of corn (*dhānyamañjarī*). The other emblem, the vase of treasure (*ratnaghaṭa*) which in reality is the most important of her attributes, is represented by a pair of vases one under each foot (*Catalogue of the Sarnath Museum*, B (f) 19, p. 147, Plate XV, b). In sculpture No. B (f) 20 the right foot of the deity 'is placed on an inverted vase which rests on a lotus flower. This vase is apparently a treasure vase, the attribute of Vasundharā. The line of seven similar vases lying upside down on the top of the vase was added manifestly by the sculptor to emphasise the idea of Vasundharā's control over the wealth of the world'. [Sahni, ibid, p. 147]. The eight vases most probably correspond to the Ashṭa-Vasus, the eight Vasu deities who are counted as the *gaṇa-devatās* making up the traditional number of the *Trayas-triṁśat* Devas. Whatever that may be, the fact remains that the images of Vasudhārā emphasized the *ratna-ghaṭa* as an emblem of the goddess.

From this known attribute on the images from Sarnath we now proceed to a group of statuettes from Mathura in which we find a two-armed female figure standing with the

[1]Also Foucher, *l' dconographie Bouddhipue de'dnde*, 1905, p.*85*.

right hand in *abhayamudrā*. In her left hand she holds a lotus parasol. For all practical purposes the female figure is identical with the well known Gaja-Lakshmī or Nāgī figures from Mathura, but without the elephants or the serpent hoods. The typical standing female figure with left hand akimbo is also known to us from the coins of Mathura and some of the tribal coins. In the early centuries of the Christian era there seems to have been a recognised type of female figure which was employed with certain minor changes to represent the iconographic forms of the different goddesses, such as Lakshmī, Hārīti, Nāgī etc. It is this form that constantly recurs in the numerous female statuettes of the Kushāṇa period discovered at Mathura. The two-armed female figure with a pair of vases and with right hand in *abhaya-mudrā* is certainly of divine rank, and the vases appear as her distingushing symbol.

The statuette No. 1695 in the Mathura Museum shows the goddess holding a lotus parasol in her right hand, left hand is akimbo, and on her right side is a pair of vases placed one over the other. In statuette No. 1411 the lotus parasol is in the left hand, the right hand is in *abhayamudrā*, and the vases are placed, one on each side of the legs. The same arrangement of the *ghaṭas* is found in statuettes Nos. 1583, and 2523. A Fragment No. 127 shows only the lower portion of the goddess standing between two elongated jars bearing on the pedestal an inscription reading *Dharasenasya* in the script of the Kushāṇa period. It is therefore apparent that the iconography of the goddess in the art of Mathura shows some difference from that at Sarnath, viz., that the right hand is held not in *varada*, but in *abhaya* pose; and a lotus parasol held either by the left or right hand is a new feature. The connecting link between the two group of figures from two different periods remains, however, the treasure vases, and these may be looked upon as the principal cognizance in the iconography of Vasudhārā. Much of the Buddhist and Hindu iconography was in its formative stage during the Kushāṇa epoch and details had not yet become crystallised. It therefore does not much matter if the *varada* pose and the *dhānyamañjarī* of the medieval period are missing at an earlier period, or more correctly speaking had not been perfected as emblems of this goddess. The *ratna pātra* was deemed enough to mark out the identity of the deity represented.

There is yet another symbol which is met with in the images of Vasudhārā from Mathura described above. It is a *mīna-mithuna* or pair of fish that is found suspended from the lower handle of the lotus parasol (*padmātapatra*) held in the left hand. Figures Nos. 1411, 1695, 2523 and 748 also have the fish symbol. It should, however, be noted that in statuette No 2523 which is well-preserved the number of fish is three, the third fish is shown attached to the upper end of the lotus parasol. We shall presently see its earlier connections. In statuette No. 1583 we find the female figure with the right hand in *abhaya* pose, but without the fish-pair suspended from the umbrella post; the *ratnaghaṭas*, however, indicate her true character. It represents the transitional stage when the fish symbol was being omitted.

In one specimen [No. 748] the *abhaya* pose and the fish symbol with the *padmāta-patra* occur but the *ratna-ghaṭas* are wanting. It most likely points to an earlier transitional stage when the symbol of the treasure-vases had not come into vogue. And this brings us to

a third group of figures consisting only of terracottas in which the fish symbol alone is found associated with the standing female figure whose left hand is placed on the girdle and the right hand holds a string with a pair of fish suspended from its ends. A typical specimen [Mathura Museum, No. 2243] is illustrated in the Mathura Museum Handbook (second edition), Plate VII, Fig. 14[1]. Stylistically the figure is related to the Yakshī figures from Bharhut and Bodhgaya, and the conspicuous headdress, heavy earrings, full broad face and the narrow junction of the breasts and waist point to its being a product of the Sunga period. Here the auspicious jewel-vases find no place, and the iconographic conception with *mīna-mithuna* appears to be insulating itself from the vague and general belief in a Mother Goddess who was the precursor of the later classical goddesses. The fish symbol associated with waters, which is the birthplace of the *nidhis* or mythical riches, is much more elemental in conception than the treasure-vases. We do not yet precisely know the significance of the fish symbol in relation to these female figures from Mathura. But working back from the known figures of the Kushāṇa period in which both the *ratna-ghaṭa* and the *mīna-mithuna* occur side by side in one and the same figures, to terracotta figurines with only the fish emblem, we at least find some common links which may tentatively serve as pointers in the direction of identifying these early figurines of the Sunga period. Whether in the religious upheaval accompanying the early Indian art of Bharhutt, Sanchi and Mathura of the Sunga period, the conception of Vasudhārā had been developed and grasped we have no obvious means of determining. The few Mathura figurines are our only source at present.

It may also be pointed out that a third fish placed horizontally below the two others is found in the terracotta figurines . It is visible also in the illustration of terracotta No. 2243 described above. We have also seen that in statuette No. 2523 of the Kushāṇa period discussed before a third fish figures separately from the *mīna-mithuna* and is carved near the upper end of the lotus-stalk. Perhaps the explanation may be found in the tradition of the Tantras where the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā as the two principal energy-systems and the Sarasvatī as the central one are symbolised as rivers, and naturally by means of fish.

Vasudhārā may ultimately be found to have been identical with the Earth goddess Vasundharā whom the *Atharvaveda* calls *hiraṇya-vakshā*, the golden bosomed who conceals within here womb the treasures (*vasu, maṇi, hiraṇya*) of the world. The following two verses give us a vivid picture of the Earth goddess as the presiding deity of wealth[2]:

विश्वम्भरा वसुधानी प्रतिष्ठा हिरण्यवक्षा जगतो निवेशनी ।
वैश्वानरं बिभ्रती भूमिरग्निमिन्द्र ऋषभा द्रविणो नो दधातु ॥६॥
निधिं बिभ्रती बहुधा गुहा वसु मणिं हिरण्यं पृथिवी ददातु मे ।
वसूनि नो वसुदा रासमाना देवी दधातु सुमनस्यमाना ॥४४॥

[1] An almost similar Mathura specimen is figured by Dr. Coomaraswamy in his Indian Terracottas published in the *IPEK*, 1928, Fig. 24.

[2] Atharva, Pṛithivī Sūkta, XII.1.6 and 44.

We find here the significant epithets Vasudhānī and Vasudā applied to earth which are only synonyms of Vasudhārā. We also meet with the imagery that the goddess earth sends out myriad streams (*dhārā*) of wealth as an unflinching cow rains streams of milk :

सहस्रं धारा द्रविणस्य मे दुहां ध्रुवेव धेनुरनपस्फुरन्ती ।

This is just the idea underlying Vasudhārā. Earth is the prototype of the Great Mother Goddess (Mahī Mātā), and Vasudhārā as a specialised classical goddess may only be an emanation from that cosmic form of the Magna Mater which antedated all that we have in Indian iconography. In fact the identification of Vasudhārā with the Earth goddess is carried one step forward by the appearance of the Earth-goddess with a vase beneath the right hand of the Buddha in Sarnath [*Catalogue*, p. 67, B (b) 175, plate IX]. The association of a vase with the Earth goddess during the Gupta period is also in keeping with the iconographic evolution of Vasudhārā after the Kushāṇa period when the fish symbol ceased to be associated with her.

The above iconography of Vasudhārā, ancient as it is, was preceded by an elaborate symbolism rooted in Vedic philosophy and ritual, and transferred to an extensive folk-cult. Vasudhārā literally means 'Shower of wealth'. It is the same as the latter idea of the 'Rain of Heavenly Gold' (*divya-suvarṇa-vṛishṭi*). It had become an accepted literary motif and a common belief in the people that the rule of piety, *Dharma*, of the Chakravartī Sovereign brings the Rain of Gold from Heaven. In the Śānti Parva, we read of Hiraṇya Vṛishṭi in the kingdom of Suhotra (*Śānti Parva*, 29.24—26, Poona Ed.). The Divyāvadāna says that in the reign of the Chakravartī King Māndhātā there was Rain of Gold for a week (*vṛishṭam me saptāham antaḥpure hiraṇya-varsham*, *Divyāvadāna*, p. 213). The motif of the 'Shower of Coin' is repeated in the Divyāvadāna (*na kārśhāpaṇa-varsheṇa triptiḥ kameshu vidyate*, *Divyāvadāna*, p. 224). This was a predominant belief during the Golden Age of Indian history when mountains of gold accumulated in the country as a result of inter-continental commerce so that actually a shower of golden coins appeared to have come as heavenly rain. This is visible to us even today in the abundant hoards of Gupta Gold coins. Bāṇa inspired by the same ideals of plenty and prosperity mentions the motif of Vasudhārā, Shower of Wealth brightened with gold descending from a merciful Heaven (*mahākanakāvadātaṁ Vasudhārāmiva dyauḥ*, *Harsha Chariṭa*, ch. 4, p. 134, Nirnayasagar, 5th Ed.). *Mahākanaka* is taranslated by Śaṅkara as *tila-suvarṇa*, i.e. minute particles of gold (Hindi, *ravālā sonā*) which was the same as the ancient *Paipīlika suvarṇa*, or in other words, gold-dust. When the earth reaches its maximum point of productivity that is known as *abhyudaya*, prosperity ; but when even that is exceeded due to the potency of good Karmas, a state of *mahā-abhyudaya*, Great Prosperity, is made visible in Heaven's Grace by sending down a rain of gold, *Dhana-vṛishṭih* (*Vasudhārā mahābhyudaya sūchanāya divā patati*, Śaṅkara). The above references are from the Gupta civilisation and later than the figurines of Vasudhārā discussed above but they show the continuity of this idea. As in the case of Srī-Lakshmī, her iconography and cult had been handed down from Vedic times and continued up to even later periods, so it was in the case of Vasudhārā.

In the Yajurveda, Book 18, known as the 'Chamakādhyāya', is an elaborate adoration of the Goddess Vasudhārā (Vedic *Vasor Dhārā*) in which all the blessings of Mind and Matter, of the Devas and the Bhūtas, are invoked to come to the worshipper as the fruit of his performing the Yajña. The idea of Yajña is to propitiate the divine powers, that is, to become attuned with them, and the fruit of Yajña is *Dakshiṇā* which the Gods confer on each Yajamāna according to his wishes. About four hundred such *Āhutis*—oblations are enumerated, e.g., Vāja, Kratu, Prāṇa, Jyoti, Vāk, Mana, Asu, Chitta, Atmā, Tanu, Śarīra, Āyu, Mahimā, Satya, Śraddhā, Moda, Amṛita, Jīvatu, Abhaya, Sudina, Saṁvit, Kāma, Kṛishi, Pushṭi, Ṛiddhi ; but the most sublime gift in this list is that of *Vasu* bestowed in the form *Karma* and *Śakti* (*Karma cha me śaktiścha me*, Yajus, 18.15).

The Brāhmaṇas make the idea more explicit. 'This Agni on earth is Vasu, the greatest wealth ; for him the gods sent this shower and propitiated him. Since the divine Vasu sent this shower, the latter is called *Vasudhārā* (ŚB. 9.3.2.1). 'Because it is the Stream of Wealth (*Vasumayī Dhārā*) ,therefore, they call it *Vasor Dhārā* (ŚB. 9.3.2.4). Of this *Vasor Dhārā*, the immortal heaven is the Self (*etasyai Vasordhārāyai dyaurevātmā*, ŚB. 9.3.3.15) ; for the Shower of Wealth clouds are the teats of Heaven and lightning the breast, *abhramūdhaḥ*, ŚB. 9.3.3.16, *vidhyut stanaḥ*). Wherever there are Showers of Gold it becomes the capital of God Indra (*Vasordhārānām Aindra-nagaram*, Gopatha, 1.1.23). The last idea is repeated by Kālidāsa—a prosperous kingdom is the abode of Indra (*ṛiddhaṁ hi rājyaṁ padamaindramāhuḥ*, *Raghuvaṁśa*, 2.50).

In the iconography of Vasudhārā the *Pūrṇaghaṭa* and the Fish are important features. The full Vase stands for the auspicious divine Waters which are the Mothers of the Vasus or Vasu in the form of Agni identified as the Jewel (*Ratna*) or Wealth. The Fish is also believed to be the source of pearls. Thus these two became the signs of Vasudhārā, but the Fish also was the symbol of the Egg, viz., *Hiraṇya Garbha*, the Golden Germ. It is the Shower of the Golden Germ or the Life-principle that was really at the root of the whole conception of Vasudhārā. It was an offshoot of the Vedic doctrine of *Hiraṇya Garbha*.

VI

MATHURA ART

15. PRE-KUSHĀṆA ART OF MATHURA

During the first three centuries of the Christian era, Mathura filled almost the whole picture in the realm of artistic activity in North-eastern India. It is common knowledge that the great Kushāṇa emperors Kanishka, Vāsishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva were munificent patrons of the Buddhist faith and took pride in raising stupendous monuments for the edification of their cherished religion. Innumerable *Stūpas* and *Vihāras* must have been built under their liberal patronage and at Mathura we have evidence of a definite instance in which a *Vihāra* or monastery owed its existence to the liberality of Emperor Huvishka. The Shāhānushāhis not only evinced personal interest in the erection of public buildings of a religious and secular character, but also encouraged their higher officials to dedicate funds for the endowment of public institutions. In a recently acquired pillar inscription from Girdharpur it is recorded that in the year twenty-eight, in (the month of) September, the first day (of the month) a Charitable Home (*Puṇyaśālā*) was endowed with a perpetual gift by the nobleman Prāchi, son of Rukamāna, ruler of the Kharāsalera and chief of the Vakana tribe..... 'Whatever be the merit of the gift, that belongs to His Majesty Huvishka, and to *those who hold His Majesty dear*'. (*J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 5). This nobleman must have been obviously a devout servant of the Devaputra Shāhi Huvishka, who though of foreign origin was in this case edifying the Brāhmanical religion by endowing a substantial sum for such acts of piety as gave to the Puṇyaśālā its significant name. At Sarnath we have the instance of the Great Satrap (*Mahākshatrapa*) Kharapallāna and the Satrap Vanashpara who erected a colossal Bodhisattva together with a *Chhattra-yashṭi* in the year third of the Mahārāja Kanishka (*Sarnath Museum Catalogue*, pp. 35-36). Thus we may be sure that the abundant architectural output of the Kushāṇa period was the result of a carefully-devised policy emanating from the emperors and permeating the entire rank of state officials. In the development of art and architecture, Mathura took long strides in a short time and perfected its artistic canons to a degree of excellence that for a time put into shade the ancient stone-cutters of Sanchi and Bharhut. Mathura became the most prolific centre of art production during this period and its ateliers flourished as warehouses for the newly conceived Buddha and Bodhisattva images to be exported to such distant places as Sarnāth, Sanchi, Kuśīnagara and Śrāvastī.

The sculptors of Mathura were confronted with one supreme task, viz., that of amalgamating the two divergent currents of differing religious traditions, i.e., worship of Kubera with all its attendant Yakshas and Yakshīs, Vṛikshakas and Pushpa-Bhañjikās on the one hand, and the worship of the Bodhisattva or Buddha on the other. It must be said to the credit of these Mahāyānist art-workers that they acquitted themselves remarkably well. They realised that the people were anxious to bow to the Buddha, but not at the cost of the traditional Yaksha. They were ready to welcome the serene Yogī Buddha but did not

like to be deprived of the cherished female motifs to which they had been used since the days of the Mauryas and the Sungas. The Buddha figure offered to be integrated on the broad canvas of religious life as one contributing to the refinement of the life inside the home and not to its unsettlement. The Buddha incarnating in stone for the first time was not to play the role of an iconoclast with regard to other deities of the existing pantheon. In art, and in religion, everywhere the prevailing note was harmony and amity, not dissension or discord. The genius of the Kushāṇa art-makers comprehended the problem rightly and rendered a good account of themselves by producing most splendid and beautiful specimens of the Bodhisattva, the Buddha, Vishṇu, Sūrya, Śiva, Jina, Kubera, Yakshas, Nāgas and their female counterparts.

We may briefly summarise the achievements of the Kushāṇa artists as follows :—

1. Carving out for the first time the Buddha figure in stone ;
2. Making images of the various Brāhmanical deities, as Sūrya, Vishṇu, Śiva, Durgā, Sarasvatī and Seven Mothers, etc. ;
3. Perfecting in an endless variety the ancient cult of the Kubera and Yaksha worship and giving plastic forms to them, in short a faithful adherence to the older traditions of Sanchi and Bharhut both in composition and technique ;
4. Retaining the non-sectarian character of their work and yet serving the ends of all the three cults, the Buddhist, Jaina and Brāhmanical.

But the great age of the Kushāṇas, though veritably the golden age for the Mathura School of sculpture, does by no means represent its beginning. They were not novices in the art of stone-cutting who fashioned the Katra Bodhisattva (Mathura Museum, A 1), portraits of Wema, Kanishka and Chashṭana and a vast gallery of most beautiful and perfectly carved railing pillars with figures of Yakshiṇīs and Vṛikshakās engraved on one side and Jātaka and life-scenes of the Buddha on the other. The traditions of the Mathura School were already of respectable antiquity when the revival of art took place under the Tigra-khaudas. The early Indian school of Sanchi, Bharhut and Bodh-Gayā had an important outpost at Mathura, where remarkable parallels of the Yakshīs and Vṛikshakas, dwarfs and fantastic animals, *toraṇas* and railings were being constantly wrought in considerable numbers. Dr. Coomaraswamy remarks that 'the school of Mathura is more nearly related to Bharhut than to Sanchi, and is represented by some fragmentary sculptures which must go back to the middle of the second century B.C.'. It is proposed in this article to give an account of the pre-Kushāṇa specimens found at Mathura and now preserved in the local Archæological Museum, and we shall naturally devote our attention to the elucidation of certain points connected with the famous group of the colossal Yaksha images which are said to be the most conspicuous specimens of the old national and indigenous school of art in India.

Mathura must have been an important centre in the Mauryan empire of Aśoka, but it is strange that while Sarnath, Prayāga and Sanchi were considered suitable sites to be

chosen for the erection of his monolithic inscribed columns, Mathura, an important town connecting, as a natural emporium of trade, the north-west with the centres on the lower Gaṅgā, should have remained without any such monumental remnant of the Great Buddhist Emperor.

It has been affirmed with some justice that no genuinely Mauryan relics have so far been discovered at Mathura (R. B. Rama Prasad Chanda, *A.S.R.* 1922-23, p. 164). In none of the sculptural finds can we detect the characteristic polish which proclaims without doubt the Mauryan nature of a find. But it is hard to believe that Mathura as a religious centre was at a discount in the Mauryan age. We read in the life of Hiuen Tsang: "In the kingdom of Mathura there are still to be seen the *Stūpas* in which were deposited of old the relics of the holy disciples of Sākyamuni, viz., Sāri-putra, Mudgalāyana, Pūraṇa-Maitrāyaṇī-putra, Upāli, Ānanda, Rāhula and Mañjuśrī. On the yearly festivals, the religious assemble in crowds at these *stūpas*, and make their several offerings at the one which is the object of their devotion. The followers of *Abhi-dharma* offer to Sāri-putra, and those who practise contemplation (*dhyāna*) to Mudgalāyana. Those who adhere to the Sūtras pay their homage to Pūraṇa-Maitrāyaṇī-pútra. Those who study the *Vinaya* honour Upāli, religious women honour Ānanda, those who have not yet been fully instructed (catechumens) honour Rāhula; those who study the Mahā-Yāna honour all the Bodhisattvas. Five or six *li*, i.e., about a mile and a quarter to the east of the town is a monastery on the hill said to have been built by the venerable Upagupta. His nails and beard are preserved there as relics" (*Mathura Memoirs* by Growse, part I, p. 62). These seven stūpas with the exception of that of Rāhula, are the same as those noted by Fahien. Now we know from the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* that Sāri-putta[1], the foremost of the highly wise (*Maha-paññā*), Mahā Moggallāna, the foremost of the possessors of miraculous powers (*iddhimantānam*), Punna Mantaniputta, the foremost of the preachers of dhamma (*dhamma-kathikānam*), Rāhula, the foremost of the students (*sikkha-kamānam*), Ānanda, the foremost of the vastly learned (*bahussutānam*) and Upāli, the foremost of the masters of Vinaya (*Vinayadharānam*), were the most proficient disciples of the Buddha in subjects noted against them and their names can be recognised in Hiuen Tsang's list of saints whose *stūpas* existed at Mathura *from days of old* with relics of the above worthies enshrined in them from a remote antiquity. What that period could possibly have been when *stūpas* were reaised over the relics of these great teachers? It seems but reasonable to suppose that it should have been the age of Aśoka when Mathura was fitly honoured by the construction of a number of holy stūpas. Nor need the mention of Mañjuśrī disturb us, for Hiuen-Tsang is careful enough to associate the Mahāyānists with the worship of the stūpa if Mañjuśrī and the other Bodhisattvas, who were thus isolated from the gallery of older patriarchs being worshipped by their respective followers.

[1] *Journal of the Department of Letters*, Calcutta University, Vol. III, 1920, pp. 252-53.

It is not necessary to dwell more on the achievements of Mathura sculptors during the Mauryan age in the absence of any definite site which could be demonstrated as sheltering a Mauryan monument. The reason of such an absence may probably be that all that was excavated at Mathura during the last seventy-five years was not adequately surveyed at the time of proper operations, or it is also just likely that there are yet some mounds which may one day bring to light genuinely Mauryan relics both in the field of sculpture and architcture. This should be so specially with a thorough exploration of the sites which have yielded Sunga relics, like the Parkham statue, and the Mora and Ganeshra inscribed bricks or the fine cross-bar of the Gāyatrī-Ṭīlā. The paucity of sculptural specimens of the Aśokan art of the Maurya period may be said to be more than compensated by an abundance of the pre-Maurya and Maurya terracottas discovered at Mathura in surprisingly large numbers and deposited in all the big Museums in India and outside. The study of these terracottas is a vast subject in itself and it is much to be regretted that a systematic treatment of the problems disclosed after such study is a desideratum in our study of the ancient Indian art.

The earliest extant specimens of sculptures at Mathura bring us face to face with the so-called Ancient National School, which arose side by side with and possibly even prior to, the Aśokan school, and a continuous history of which may be traced for four hundred years in India (*A.S.R.*, 1922-23, p. 164). Sir John Marshall speaks of three main classes of pre-Kushāṇa sculptures at Mathura ; the earliest belonging to the second century B.C. (to which class we would assign the Parkham statue and Mansādevī), the second to the following century ; and the last associated with the rule of the local Satraps (*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, pp. 632-633). Amongst specimens of the first class stand out the colossal statues of Yakshas discovered at Parkham and Baroda villages and Yakshiṇī called Mansā Devi still worshipped at Jhinga-ka-nagara village in the Mathura district. The first two are preserved in the Mathura Museum while the Yakshiṇī is *in situ* 13 miles north of the city.

The present writer had the good fortune of recently discovering another colossal statue of a Yaksha, an exact prototype of the Parkham image, having a lateral topknot on the head and standing with an epic force of volume and expressiveness (*Figs. 61, 63*). The image is of the same stone as the Parkham Yaksha, and most probably bears an inscription between its feet, but the inscription level of the image has not yet been penetrated. The height of the image visible above ground is 5 feet, its girth at shoulders inclusive of both arms is 7 feet. There are three very heavy earrings suspended in each cloven ear-lobe. The flat torque (*graiveyaka*) is tied at the back of the neck by a band having an inter-woven knot and terminating in two very beautiful tassels which most artistically dangle below on the back and whose thick flowery terminals are shown as if attached to the loop and the allied lotus-shaped medallion fastened within it, this latter device being intended to keep in position the conspicuous flat triangular necklace of the chest in front (*Fig. 63*). The artistic effect of these brocaded bands and the clever way in which the sculptor has arranged them far excels any other thing of the kind so

far seen on these colossal Yaksha figures. The figure wears a *dhoti* which is held fast by a girdle on the loins and there is a second flat girdle laid round the chest touching the lower-most fringe of the necklace. This device of the second girdle is also found in a slightly varied form fulfilling the same purpose in the corpulent Yaksha figures of the Kushāṇa period (*cf.*. Vogel's *Catalogue*, C 3). In the right upper arm there is an armlet decorated with an outstretched plumage of three feathers, while in the forearm are seen four bracelet bangles of the finest workmanship and studded with jewels of various shapes and sizes. The right arm is turned at the elbow and raised towards the shoulder. It seems to have held something which was supported against the shoulder, probably a *chaurī* (*Fig. 61*). The left arm is broken away but it may have held a purse as in the Parkham Yaksha. Technically the figure is in all details related to the Parkham image, and artistically also it is a replica of the same though much improved in finish and gracefulness of pose.

Fig. 61 Mathura Yashha (Profile View)

Fig. 62 Vaiśravaṇa Yaksha

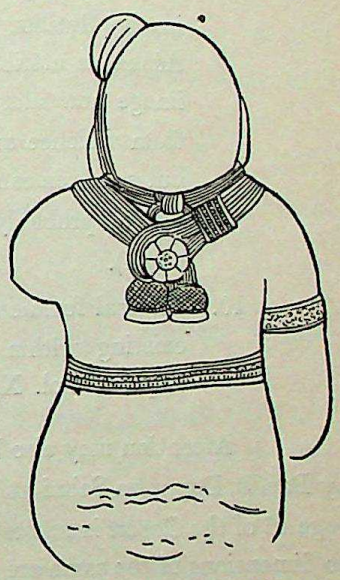

Fig. 63 Mathura Yaksha (Back View)

These Mathura images have been spoken of as 'the crudest products of the early Indian school' (R. P. Chanda, *A.S.R.* 1922-23, p. 165), nevertheless they evince some genuinely aesthetic features. They should not be understood to be isolated examples of an art prevailing in the third and second centuries B.C. We have till now discovered about ten such big statues and it will be found useful to give the following list of them :—

1. Yaksha from Parkham (*MM. C.* 1, *Fig. 37*).
2. Yaksha from Baroda village (*MM. C.* 23, *Fig. 39*).
3. Yakshiṇī image called Mansā Devī still worshipped at Jhinga-ka-nagara, 13 miles north of Mathura.
4. Another colossal Mathura Yaksha, discovered by me *Figs. 61, 63*).
5. Patna Staute of Yaksha *Vaṭnandi* in the Bharhut gallery of the Indian Museum, Calcutta.
6. Colossal statue of another *Bhage* (Bhagavān) Yaksha in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.
7. Inscribed Māṇibhadra Yaksha from Padmāvatī now in the Gwalior Museum (*A. S. R.* 1915-16, p. 105-06) (*Figs. 36, 38*).
8. Female Chauri-bearer from Didarganj in the Patna Museum.
9. Colossal female statue from Besnagar, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Smith's *History of Fine Art*, p. 62, Plate XIV). 'An uninscribed colossal statue of a female, 6 feet 7 inches in height, and found near Besnagar adjoining Bhilsa in the Gwalior State, Central India, a locality associated by tradition with Aśoka, is attributed to his regin on account of the style and costume. The image now illustrated for the first time (Plate XIV) has suffered so severely from violence and exposure that it is difficult to estimate its æsthetic quality but so far as can be judged from what is left, the statue was a good naturalistic figure, probably intended for a Yakshī, or minor deity'. (Smith's, ibid, p. 62-64).
10. Colossal female statue, 7 feet high, locally known as the Telin, or oil-woman, existing within the walls of Besnagar (Smith's, ibid, p. 64 ; Cunningham's *Reports*, Vol. X, p. 40).

Attention may also be invited to the stone figure without head and feet, excavated by Pandit Dayaram Sahni at Kosam and illustrated in plate XXI of *A. S. R.* 1921-22. On page 46 of the *Report* is suggested that the figure probably was of a Yaksha but unfortunately no dimensions of the same are given. On account of its very close resemblance with the style of the Parkham and Pawāyā Yakshas, the image deserved a more detailed notice than accorded to it in the Report. The triangular flat necklace, folds of flesh below the breasts, the *dhotī*, and the belt, position of the left hand suspended low and holding probably a purse, mark it out as an example of the old school, the same feature of the left hand being common also to the two Patna statues and the Pawāyā Yaksha. In the same plate (XXI b) is given a Sarnath female chaurī-bearer which is stylistically suggestive of the ancient National School. The Besnagar Kalpa-Vṛiksha in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, is also an example of this same old school.

IDENTIFICATION

There has been a mass of controversy about the identification of the first eight figures in the above list which constitute a distinct icon-group. The archaic aspect of the Parkham and two Patna statues and a reading of their inscriptions led Mr. K. P. Jayaswal to pronounce them as portrait statues of the great Śaiśunāga Emperor Ajātśatru and of Udāyin, Nanda and Varta Nandin respectively, who reigned between 600 B.C. and 400 B.C. Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy and several other scholars were once inclined to favour acceptance of Prof. Jayaswal's views, but later researches and a more thorough study of the development of the old indigenous art has led them to revise their opinions, as will be evident from the following remarks of Dr. Coomaraswamy about the Parkham Yaksha: "But in view of more recent criticisms it is impossible to adhere to Jayaswal's views and it is necessary to revert to the opinion that the statue represents a Yakṣa and must date from the third century B.C." (*History of Indian and Indonesian Art*). Mr. Rama Prasad Chandra minutely entering into epigraphical details has examined the question at length in his article entitled "Four Ancient Yaksha Statues" (*Journal of the Department of Letters*, Calcutta University, Vol. IV) and has to a large extent succeeded in establishing that this group of images represents the ancient Yaksha figures.

We propose here to deal with this question on the basis of three sources, viz., (*a*) epigraphy, (*b*) tradition, and (*c*) iconography, and shall see in the end that arguments from these different sources point to one unanimous conclusion.

A. EPIGRAPHY.

The images found at Parkham, Jhinga-ka-nagara, Patna and Pawāyā bear inscribed records on them.

1. PARKHAM IMAGE:—Vogel's reading of the inscription is as follows:—

(*ni*) *Bhadapugarinā*(*ka*).....(*ga*)*aṭha*.....*pi*.....*Kuni*(*ka*) *tevāsinā* (*Gomita-kena*) *katā*.

"Made by Bhadapugarin.....Gomitaka the pupil of Kunika" (Vogel's *Catalogue*, p. 83). Here the first letter should be read as *ṇi* instead of ni, then *bhada* becomes clear. It is likely that the lost letter before the initial *ṇi* may have been *ma*, and then the first word would be restored as Maṇibhada, which is also the name of a famous Yaksha on the large figure found at Pawāyā. The two letters after *bhada* have been read as *puga*, by Dr. Vogel and Sten Konow, but elongated right vertical of *pa* and the horizontal top hook of *ga* make it more probable that the word intended was *pūge*, which will give the meaning that (the image was placed) in the *pūga* or guild of Maṇibhadra, an analogy being available in the *gausṭhi* of the *Māṇibhadra-Bhaktāḥ* at Padmāvatī. The remaining two letters after *pūga* are read as *rānā* or *rājā* and the rest are doubtful. It is just possible that they gave the name of the reigning king. The inscription falls into two parts and I am inclined to believe that in the first portion running on the proper right side and between the legs were recorded the circumstances, time

and locality of establishing the image, while in the second half portion on the proper left side was given the name of the sculptor by whom the image was made (*Kunikatevāsinā katā*), a peculiarity of construction also found in the record on the Mansā Devī image. The last but one letter on the front side is decidedly *pi* (as read by Dr. Vogel) and it is very likely that the entire word read as *paṭithāpito*.

2. Mansā Devī, female image—The inscription on the female image in worship at Jhinga-ka-nagara in the Mathura district has been deciphered by Mr. Chanda (A.S.R. 1922-23, p. 165) from whom we quote below :

"Rai Bahadur Pandit Radha Krishna of Mathura has now discovered another statue of the same age, a colossal female figure seated on a wicker chair (mooṛā) at present worshipped as Mansa Devi in a modern temple at a village called Jhinga-ka-nagara (Nagariya), 13 miles to the north of Mathura. The head of the statue is lost and has been replaced by a modern one. The front side is covered with a thick coat of vermillion, but on the pedestal between the feet is a mutilated inscription in three lines which may be read as follows :—

1. *Sā putehi kārito.*
2. *Yakhilāyāvā Kunikāte.*
3. (*Vāsinā Nāke*) *na katā.*

(This image of) Yakṣi Lāyāva has been caused to be established by.....together with his sons, and made by Nāka, pupil of Kuṇika."

Thus according to the inscription itself the Mansā Devi is the image of a Yakhī or Yakshī. The two verbs *kārita* and *katā* are applicable to the donor and the sculptor respectively. In the now-remaining letters of the Parkham image inscription, it is not possible to trace the word *Yakha* (Yaksha) but if the Kuṇika mentioned in it and the Mansā Devī inscription refer to the same teacher whose disciples carved the two images, then on the analogy of the Yakhi carved by Nāka, pupil of Kuṇika, we may safely identify the image of Parkham to be that of a Yaksha, made by Gomitaka, another pupil of the same Kuṇika. The expected inscription on the new Yaksha is sure to throw much welcome light on this knotty point.

3. Pauāyā Statute—This image of Māṇibhadra was discovered by Mr. Garde, Superintendent of Archæology, Gwalior State, at a place called Pawāyā, the site of ancient Padmāvatī and is now preserved in the Museum at Gwalior. The front face of the pedestal bears the following inscription in Sanskrit in the script of about the first century A.D. :—

1. 1 राज्ञः स्वामि शिवनन्दिस्य संवत्सरे चतुर्थे ग्रीष्मपक्षे द्वितीय २ दिवसे
1. 2 द्वादशे १०२ एतस्य पूर्वायै गौष्ठ्या माणिभद्रभक्ता गर्भ सुखिताः भगवतो
1. 3 माणिभद्रस्य प्रतिमा प्रतिष्ठापयन्ति गौष्ठ्यां भगवा आयु क्लं वाचं कल्याणा-
1. 4 भ्युदयं च प्रीतो दिशतु ब्राह्मणस्य गोतमस्य क्रमारस्य ब्राह्मणस्य रुद्रदासस्य शिवत्रदाये
1. 5 शमभूतिस्य जीवस्य खंजबलस्य शिवनेमिस्य शिवभद्रस्य कुमकस्य धन दे—
1. 6 वस्य दा····।

This image of Māṇibhadra was installed in a club (*goshṭhī*) by his devotees. M. M. Hara Prasad Sastri conjectured without much support that Māṇibhadra was some Bodhisattva, but R. B. Rama Prasad Chanda has proved beyond doubt on the basis of evidence derived from Sanskrit, Jaina, and Buddhist literature that this Māṇibhadra was the name of a Yaksha (*Four Ancient Yaksha Statues*, pp. 3-6). We can therefore be sure that this Maṇibhadra was a Yaksha whose worshippers organised themselves into a kind of guild and dedicated the image of their favourite deity inside its premises.

4. Patna Statues—These two statues bear the following records according to Mr. Chanda :—

(*a*) *Bhage Achachha-nī vī ka*

(*b*) *ya kha Sa* (?) *rvaṭa namdi.*

The first may be rendered in Sanskrit as अक्षतनीविक which is the auspicious name of the deity associated with inexhaustible wealth (*akshaya-nīvi*) and he can be no other than one of the gods in the train of the tutelary deity of wealth, the lord of the Yakshas. The second needs no straining and is clearly designated as a *yakha* or Yaksha and his Sanskrit appellation can be rendered as सर्वत्र-नन्दी. From the epigraphic evidence collected here it is clear that the trend of the record is to style these images as those of Yakshas whose high position in the pantheon is indicated by the application of such honorific titles as Bhagavān.

B. Tradition.

1. Barodā Image—The two parts of the colossal male figure from Barodā near Parkham (Mathura District) are even more massive and archaic than any of the other figures ; the complete statue must have been over 12 feet in height (Dr. Vogel's *Catalogue*, p. 92 ; Mathura Museum No. C. 23). The carving is much obliterated but the heavy earrings, the necklace with four tassels at the back, and the flat girdle suggest a close relationship between this figure and the Parkham image which it surpasses in size. Pandit Radha Krishna obtained these fragments from the village of Barodā, four miles from Parkham and 2 miles from Chhargāon. *It was being worshipped under the name of Jakheya.* The information contained in the last sentence is of utmost importance for the identification of such images. It is not a little surprising that the village folk should have clung so persistently to the hoary tradition of worshipping this colossal image as a Yaksha.

2. New Mathura Yaksha (*Fig. 61, 63*)—It was one of my rare surprises when, strolling in a village, in reply to a query about some old images, I was told by four illiterate simple village-men that they had none of the objects I wanted except a big statue which they were worshipping as Jakheya. I readily offered to see what it was and discovered in a minute the beautiful image illustrated here in Figs. 61, 63. In this case too, the tradition has faithfully preserved through at least twentytwo centuries the name by which the image must have been designated on the day of its original creation.

C. Iconography

The evidence furnished by epigraphy and supplemented by tradition is also confirmed by the iconographic form and style of these images. They constitute stylistically a distinct icon-group, the technical traditions of which have been handed down through at least half a millennium from the second century B.C. to the third century A.D. The Yaksha formula supplied by these big statues was followed and adopted in the case of numberless images of moderate dimensions carved during succeeding centuries, representing Yakshas, Nāgas, Bodhisattvas and Vishṇu.

We have above referred to the purse carved in the left hand of the Parkham (only the purse still remaining), Pawāyā and Patna Yakshas. The purse was a characteristic symbol of the Yaksha-rāja Kubera in the iconography of the Kushāṇa period and no wonder if this feature is traceable to a much earlier epoch. Then the protuberant belly (*Kumbhodaratva*) was also the mark of the Buddhist god Jambhala, and this feature is conspicuous in the two Mathura statues, as also in a number of other images found at Mathura. The costume is always a *dhotī* tied with a belt on loins and another girdle tied round the chest, while later on we also find a scarf thrown over and passing on the back. Of ornaments we recognise a flat torque, triangular necklace, armlets, and very dumpy earrings. We may perhaps be justified in recognising the mention of the torque in the following sūtra of Pāṇini :—

Kula-kukshi-grīvābhyo Svā-sya-laṅkāreshu, IV. 2. 96.

This regularises the form *graiveyaka* in the sense of a neck-ornament. As available examples of the earliest *graiveyakas* we can quote the flat torques round the necks in the Parkham, Barodā and other Yakshas, which along with the triangular necklaces were handed down to the images of the Kushāṇa Bodhisattvas.

It is clear from the above that three classes of evidence viz., iconographic, epigraphic and stylistic, converge in pointing to but one conclusion, viz., that in at least the third century B.C. there flourished a school of art wholly the result of indigenous traditions and possessing a separate individuality of its own, which inspired the cutters of the Maurya-Śuṅga periods to conceive and create colossal images worshipped as Yakshas. It seems reasonable to suppose that this school did not come into existence all at once in the Mauryan period, but should have been the result of development of several centuries before that. We know of the cyclopean walls of Jarāsanda kā-Baiṭhaka which have been assigned to the Śaiśunāga period, and which point to the use of stone for building purposes in at least the sixth century B.C. It is in the fitness of things that Pāṇini, whose date on a moderate estimate must be fixed at about 500 B.C., makes mention of *Takshan* artisans, which term we prefer to render by the word sculptor, because the rival term for a cartwright was *rathakāra* and *vardhakī*. As to the enquiry about the artistic canons of Pāṇini's *takshans* the most plausible answer that suggests itself is that they were representatives of the old Indian school of sculpture, termed above as the Ancient National School. This school should not be considered an upstart

in the third or second century B.C. It must have naturally passed through an evolution of several centuries prior to the subsequent period when the masons of India came to be influenced by the Hellenistic cutters of the north-west. It is due to the existence of a gradual and protracted evolution of artistic traditions that the ancient Indians succeeded in creating absolutely independent types and motifs which in the judgment of all critics are pronounced nad unaffected by traces of foreign influence. We gather from Pāṇini that there were two kinds of *Śilpins* (artisans), viz., those belonging to the village and those working for the king. These two classes were (1) *grāmaśilpī* and (2) *rāja-śilpī* respectively. The sūtra *Grāmaḥ śilpini* (VI. 2.62) is illustrated by such form in the *Kāśikā* as *grāma-nāpita* and *grāma-kulāla,* i.e., the village hair-dresser and the village potter. The latter workman most probably was responsible for turning out pottery and terracottas in which the village-folk were interested. The other Sūtra *rājā cha-praśaṁsāyām* (VI. 2. 63) states that when praise is implied for the work of the artisan, the word *Rājan* is added as a former member of the Karmadhāraya compound without effecting any change in the accent of the latter member. The general form obtained would be *rāja-śilpī* which was to include all workmen attached to royal courts and not providing for the simple tastes of the country life. As special class of artisans coming under the *grāma-śilpī* category Pāṇini has himself spoken of the *grāma-takshan* (V. 4. 95), i.e., a stone-cutter catering for the democratic art, as opposed to court art. In fact the *Kāśikā* gives the counter-example of *Rājñas-takshā* (king's sculptor) as opposed to *grāma-takshā* or village-stone-cutter of Pāṇini (V. 4. 95).

Let us consider what these two classes of art-workers stood for. Scholars have testified to the existence of a two-fold art tradition in the Mauryan period. The monuments of Aśoka, highly polished monolithic columns with their spirited animal-mounted capitals, have been assigned to be the products of the official or court art of the Emperor. The other was a purely indigenuous art embodying the older Indian traditions and ministering to the needs of a people interested in the worship of Yakshas, Nāgas and Dryads (tree-spirits). Dr. Coomaraswamy who has fully dealt with the subject, remarks that "the distinction was not so *much between a native and a foreign art as between a folk art and a court art.* Probably the most important examples of the old art are the famous free-standing figures from Besnagar and Parkham, etc. of colossal sizes. Although of archaic aspect, and designed from a forntal view point with flattened sides, they represent a relatively advanced art and imply a long anterior development and practice, if only in the handling of wood. Magnificently conceived they express an immense material force in terms of sheer volume ; they are informed by an astounding physical energy which their archaic "stiffness" by no means obscures" (*H. I. I. A.*). This is the most reasonable view to hold about the past history and evolution of the old indigenous art otherwise known as the Ancient National School, wrought at the hands of the *grāma-takshans* whose services were requisitioned by the people for purposes of embellishing their *chaityas* (*chetiyas* or *chaeyas*) principally with the architectural and sculptural

forms of railings and *toraṇas*. This was an art untouched by the philosophy of the great enlightenment which made men look before and after in search of an ideal. The same learned authority further states that "there is no suggestion here indeed of introspection or devotion, this is an art of mortal essence, almost brutal in its affirmation, not yet spiritualised. But this is the material that must later on be used to serve the ends of passionate devotion (*bhakti*) to spiritual and unseen powers, and for the exposition of cosmic theory in terms of an elaborate theology ; the same energy finds expression in the early Kushāṇa Buddhas and survives even in the more refined creations of the Gupta Age".

A detailed study of the specimens of the early school represented in the Yakshas and Yakshīs on railings and *toraṇas* at Sānchī, (Fig. 64) Bharhut, Bodhgaya and Mathura, leads us to an important problem of Indian iconography, viz, the Indian origin of the Buddha image. One has just to look at the following series and one will not be able to resist the conclusion that the Bodhisattva type of the early Kushāṇa period, colossal and carved in the round, is a direct descendant of the early Yaksha types. We feel as if the face of the Parkham or Patna Yaksha has been transplanted to the torso of the Sarnath Bodhisattva or the Mathura Bodhisattva in the Lucknow Museum. Dr. A. Coomaraswamy who has treated the subject at length (Origin of the Buddha Image, *Art Bulletin*, 1927, pt. 4, Museum of Fine Arts) has also drawn attention to the stylistic continuity presented in the following :—

1. Parkham image (8′ 8″) in the Mathura Museum ; (Fig. 37).
2. Patna Yaksha with head (Fig. 40).
3. Bodhisatva in the Lucknow Museum, originally found at Mathura (8′).
4. Image of Bodhisattva Śākya Muni at Sarnath (8′ 1½″) [*Sarnath Museum Catalogue* B (*a*) 1′ ; gift of Bhikshu Bala of Mathura.

"In such a series the relationships are very evident, and there is no room for the insertion of any Hellenistic type". (*Yakshas* by A. K. Coomaraswamy, p. 30). Here we meet with an unconscious or at least unintentional stylistic evolution. "In early Indian art, so far as cult images are concerned one inconographic type stands out predominant. That is the standing figure with the right hand raised, the left on the hip. Sometimes the right hand holds a flower, or *Chauri*, or weapon ; sometimes the left grasps the robe, or holds a flask, but the position of the arms is constant ; those with four or more arms do not appear before the second century A.D., when the fundamentals had already been established. Stylistically the type is massive and voluminous, and altogether plastically conceived, not bounded by outlines ; the essential quality is one of energy, without introspection or spiritual aspiration. Of this type are the early images of Yakṣhas and Yakṣhīs whether independent or attendant. And it is also this type which provided the model for cult images of other deities, such as Śiva or Buddha, when the necessities of *Bhakti* determined the appearance of all deities in visible forms". (*Yakshas*, p. 29).

Stylistically speaking, therefore, the Yaksha-Bodhisattva formula affords a complete and most satisfactory explanation of the origin of the Buddha image as a genuine expression of the Indian sculptors' artistic genius.

We have to remember that in the earlier Buddha-Bodhisattva images produced by Mathura artists the difference of style between the Buddha and the Bodhisattva figures is absent. As instances may be quoted the Katra and Anyor Buddhas (MM. Nos. A. 1 and A 2) which are mutually similar in style and form, representing the seated Bhagavān Buddha under the Bodhi tree in the attitude of imparting protection, but the one is called a Bodhisattva and the other an image of Buddha. Their inscriptions inform us :—

A 1. *Budharakhitasa mātare Amohā-āsiye Bodhisacho patiṭhāyito*.....i.e., Budharakhita's mother Amohā-āsi *erected the Bodhisattva.*

A 2. *Upāsakasya Sushasya Hārushasya dānam Bu-(d) dh pratimā*.....i.e., The *Buddha image* is the gift of Upāsaka Susha of Hārusha.

Dr. Vogel remarks in this connection that 'palaeographical evidence points to the sculpture (A. 1) belonging to the early Kushāṇa period. It is with the Buddha image of Anyor (A 2) the oldest representation of Śākyamuni of which the date can approximately be fixed by an inscription, and must be one of the first Buddhist images made in Mathura'. (Vogel's *Catalogue*, p. 48). According to him A *2 Buddha-pratimā* may be assigned to the early Kushāṇa period on account of the character which agrees closely with that of the Sarnath Bodhisattva inscriptions of the third year of Kanishka. The image is the oldest Buddha figure designated as such in an inscription and must, therefore, be one of the first representations of Buddha found in India, excluding Gandhara. (Vogel's *Catalogue*, p. 49). The question of Gandhara characteristics, if any, in the style of these Buddha images, need not detain us, as here we aim at showing that in the Mathura school the artists in the beginning made no distinction between a Buddha and Bodhisattva statue. They had before their mind's eye the stylistic type of the Yaksha and the idealistic type of Śākyamuni. Iconographic niceties between Buddha and Bodhisattva did not matter to them.

This Yaksha-*cum*-Bodhisattva-Buddha formula is seen applied at its best in the colossal Sarnath and Lucknow images, the former one [Sarnath Museum No. B(a)1] has been invariably designated a Bodhisattva in the three inscriptions engraved on the image and its umbrella-post (*Chhatra-yashṭi*) [Vogel's *Catalogue of the Sarnath Museum*, pp. 35-36]. The absence of this distinction between Buddha and Bodhisattva is attributable to so late a date as the year third of king Kanishka.

Thus it is established that the earliest Buddhas or Bodhisattva at Mathura were cast into the plastic moulds of the Yaksha forms of the ancient Indian School. Nevertheless scholars like Dr. Coomaraswamy whilst recognising the independent contribution of the Mathura school in the shaping of the Buddha image on the lines of older traditions have noted

the fact 'that a Hellenistic element, plastic and iconographic of some kind, enters into and is absorbed by Indian art, remains' (*H. I. I. A.* by Coomaraswamy).

Much has already been written for and against the famous theory of the Greek origin of the Buddha image, propounded by Foucher, and once adopted by many adherents. Of late, criticism on the point has become more sober and scholars are beginning to feel that emphasis on an absolute origin in one school is academical rather than real, because the importance of foreign or Gandhara influences in the composition of the Yogī *Buddha image* is only slight. Mr. Vincent Smith went so far as to say that the Gupta Buddha is 'absolutely independent of the Gandhara school'. It should then be conceded that the Kushāṇa Bodhisattvas and the transitional forms could not originally have been derived from Gandhara.

Let us look at the facts from an unbiassed point of view. Mathura in the first century B.C. came under the sway of the Śaka-Satraps, viz., Mahā-Kshattrapa Śoḍāsha and his father Rañjuvala, and others. The most famous monument of this period is the well-known Lion-capital of Mathura, now in the British Museum, with Kharoshṭhī inscriptions which mention the Mahāsaṅghika order of monks, the Sarvāstivādin monk from Nagar and an other resident of Taxila. It was during this period that intercourse between Mathura and Gandhāra seems to have been fairly established, as a result of which the workmen of the interior of India came into contact with those of the North-west for the mutual advantage of both. Within the geographical triangle of Ujjain, Mathura and Taxila held under the sway of the Kshaharāta Satraps, named Nahapāna, Śoḍāsha and Liaka respectively, was witnessed the powerful mingling of three different currents of culture, ancient Hindu, Yavana (Greek) and Iranian (Śaka-Parthian), in the first century B.C. and later. Mathura became the sacred spot for the confluence of this *Triveṇī* of cultures, and this contact is fully reflected in the specimens of its Museum (*cf.* R. P. Chanda's remarks in the *Report of the Mathura Museum for 1931*, page 7). It became a period of unprecedented artistic activity and supplied a befitting prologue to the age of the Great Kushāṇas in the first and second centuries A.D. In this interval the earlier Buddhist school of Mathura with its fundamentally Indian character received an inspiration partly from the North-west, but there also it thoroughly indianised its borrowings (*cf.* Vogel's *Cat. of Mathura Museum*, p. 33). It continued to follow unhampered the traditions of Bharhut and Sānchī in the making of numberless types and compositions, viz., the Yakshīs, Vṛikshakās, Atlantes, winged animals, tritons, Padma-pāṇi[1] Yakshas, Jāṭakas, life-scenes of Gautama, figures of donors, lotus-seat etc., and also its architectural forms of *stūpas*, *vihāras* and *chaityas*, the Buddhist railing and the Toraṇas, together with a vast array of animal and floral designs and sacred symbols. Thus equipped with an effective

[1] Examples of Padma-Pāṇi Yaksha in the ancient Indian sculpture occur at the following places: 1. Sānchī-Guardian Yaksha at the base of a pillar, north *Toraṇa* (Fig. 64): 2. Āmin (Thaneshwar) Yaksha with *Padma* in hand; 3. Mathura Yaksha on railing pillar with lotuses in right hand (Fig. 66); also Smith's *Jaina Stūpa*, pl. 64).

individuality of its own and coming into possession of an enhanced political prestige during the Śaka-Satrap period, it stretched out one of its hands with the Buddha and Bodhisattva figures to offer to Gandhara, and the other hand with the same delectable present eastward to Sarnath, Sahet-Mahet, Kusīnārā and Bodhgaya which were once important centres of ancient National School in East India, where numerous Mathura Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have been unearthed. R. B. Rama Prasad Chanda writes about this eastward contribution of Mathura : 'There is apparently a gap of about three centuries in the history of sculpture in Eastern India between the Śuṅga and the Gupta periods, and almost all sculptures of the intervening space that are found there are either importations from Mathura or are works of artists from Mathura with red sandstone as the material' (*A. S. R.* 1922-23, p. 170). What has been said above with regard to the westward expansion of the Mathura school, may as well apply to the eastward expansion of the Gandhara school, as Dr. Coomaraswamy succinctly puts it : *'It (Gandhara art) may be described from one point of view as representing an eastward extension of Hellenistic civilisation, mixed with Iranian elements from another as a westward extension of Indian culture in a western garb'*. (*H. I. I. A.*). This discovers to us in a most balanced manner the contribution of one school to the other, and having juxtaposed the two together as neighbours, independent yet friendly, guides us to the grasp of that status in which in ancient times the courses of their progress mutually influenced each other. After all that has been said and written, the fact remains of the old Indian art, now shifted from Sānchī to Mathura still continuing to flourish in full vigour and splendour during the first three centuries of the Christian era in the Śūrasena country, of course with the absorbed traditions of its new culture-feeders.

Let us now turn to other examples of older art at Mathura. It is well known that in the scenes from the life of Buddha depicted in the older art ; *he is not represented in human form, but only by symbols*, of which the *chaitya-vṛiksha*, Bodhi-druma, Stūpa, and Dharmachakra or the wheel are the most usual. Beneath the Bodhi-tree is an altar (*Bodhi-maṇḍa*) or throne (*vajrāsana*). On the other hand, in all Jātaka scenes, the future Buddha (Bodhisattva) is visibly represented in his human or animal form. The anthropomorphic representation of the Buddha figure nowhere occurs in the plastic language of the ancient Indian schoolat Sanchi, Bharhut, Bodh-Gaya or Mathura. At Amaravati in the second century A.D. we find the old symbolic schemes are still in use but side by side with these is also met the image of the Buddha introduced as an integral part of the composition. Between Sanchi and Amaravati stands inserted the Mathura school, whose Jaina Tīrthaṅkara images and some of theBuddhas or Bodhisattvas cannot be related to any known examples of the Gandhara school.

In the pre-Buddha image period in Mathura sculpture the use of the following symbols representing Buddha deserves notice :—

1. Dharma-chakra on pedestal (MM. 438, Fig. V). It is found in the central medallion of a railing upright (2 feet in height), found in a well at the Mahādevaghāṭ, ad-

jacent to Jumna Bagh in Sadar. Above is a half-lotus, in the centre is installed a Dharma-chakra from which four streamers are flowing, placed on a Ḍamaru-shaped pedestal in which the central cylinder is joined to two sets of triple parasols. The Dharma-chakra is thus elevated to a Sapta-bhūmika Āsana (seven-storeyed seat). In the lowest medallion is carved a winged lion expressive of great spirit. The specimen must belong at least to the first century B.C. and was discovered in the vicinity of the group of mounds, Saptarshi and others, which yielded the famous blue schist female Queen or Hārīti.

2. Stūpa-worship (Vogel's *Catalogue* No. I. 10). This is a frieze probably belonging to the *Urdhvapatta* of a Stūpa. It depicts the worship of a Stūpa decorated with two parasols worshipped by a Sreshṭhin preceded by two attendants carrying parasols probably intended to be dedicated to the Stūpa.

3. Two other symbols, the *Ushnīsha* and the begging-bowl (*Bhikshā-pātra*) are shown on a Toraṇa tympanum carved on two sides (MM. No. I. 1), each divided by concentric arches into three lunulate areas. On one face the centres of the three compartments are occupied by an alms-bowl apparently filled to the brim with offerings, a Buddha seated in the protecting attitude, and a Bodhisattva in royal attire seated in meditation under a tree. On the reverse we have in upper compartment Buddha's head-dress which, as we know, received the homage of the thirty-three gods and in the central one a Bodhisattva (Dr. Vogel's *Catalogue*, p. 133).

This piece must belong to early first century A.D., and is interesting as an iconographic epitome in that it shows the symbolical and anthropomorphic representations of the Buddha and Bodhisattva treated together.

Another noteworthy example of the Śuṅga period is a jamb fragment (MM. No. 1516) consisting of several panels of carving but of which only the first one is completely preserved, while in the second separated from the upper one by a Buddhist railing are seen head of two male figures with characteristic heavy Śuṅga turbans. The interest of this piece proceeds from its representing a *Chaitya-vṛiksha* very closely resembling the *Kalpadruma* from Besnagar (now in the Calcutta Museum) encircled by a square railing, in the angles of which are planted three parasols dedicated to the tree spirit.

Toraṇa Jamb No. H.12 is important for two reasons, firstly it makes us familiar with the earliest form of seat originally meant for the symbols but here supporting the Buddha himself, and secondly for the plastic form of the Buddha's face which very much resembles the old Bhikshu faces. The composition depicts the scene of the four *Lokapālas* presenting Bhikshā-pātra to Buddha, but it must be a very early piece belonging to the beginning of the first century A.D. The graded pyramid placed inverted on a square *Āsana*, represents the seat for the Buddha which at once reminds of the Sapta-bhūmika Āsana of the Dhamma-chakra described above (MM. 438). This peculiar pedestal is in turn supported by a

pair of addorsed lions. The whole piece is effectively reminiscent of the transitional forms in the growth of the Buddha image.

The Vedikā or railing was the most important product of the early art and was cherished as the main object for display of the sculptor's decorative skill. The emergence of the Buddha image gradually threw the railing into the background. It was still the favourite theme in the Kushāṇa period but went out of fashion during the Gupta epoch. The railing originally consisted of the following parts :—

1. Upright pillars having three mortices on each side (Pali *thaba*, Sans. *stambha*).
2. Cross-bar (*Suchī*).
3. Base (*ālambana-piṇḍikā*).
4. Coping-stone (*Ushṇīsha*).

The railing flourished as an architectural feature common to the monuments of all the three religions. Instances of Buddhist railings are already so numerous.

Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar succeeded in excavating railings (*Śilā-prākāra*) in the Hindu shrine of Sankarshaṇa and Vāsudeva at Nagarī ancient Mādhyamikā (*Arch. Survey Memoir* No. 4, p. 119), and has remarked in this connection that "without being dogmatic on the point, I must say that I could not help thinking that what are now called railings round *Stūpas* were really *pujā-śilā-prākāras*, though they were round and ours was rectangular" (*Ibid.*, p. 129). He has rightly connected this instance of a Hindu railing termed the *pujā-śilā-prākāra* with the *silāvigaḍabhichā* occurring in the Rummindei pillar inscription of Aśoka. For examples of Jaina railings we may remark that though King Khāravela of Kalinga has referred to the Kalinga Jaina image (line 12) and the temples of all deities (*sarva-devāyatana*) in line 17 of Hathi-gumpha inscription, which facts prove the antiquity of the Jaina religious art in the second century B.C., yet it is the unique fortune of the Mathura School that instances of Jaina railings have been unearthed at one of its most ancient sites, the Kankali Tila. Hundreds of examples of railing pillars and cross-bars decorated with a vast multitude of animal, floral and religious patterns were found which are now deposited in the Lucknow Museum and have been adequately illustrated in V. A. Smith's *The Jaina Stūpa of Mathura*. The finds from the Kankali site constitute a group by themselves for purposes of detailed study of the Mathura sculpture. There existed on the Kankali site, Mathura, a Jaina *Prāsāda* (temple) in the second century B.C., to which subsequently another was added about the middle of the first century B.C. Dr. Bühler wrote that "with respect to the history of the Jaina sect, we learn through No. 1 (inscription of Utaradasaka recording the gift of a *prāsāda-toraṇa*) that the Jainas were settled in Mathura in the second century B.C. and through No. XX (*vodve thupe deva nirmite*) that an ancient Jaina *Stūpa* existed in Mathura, which in A.D. 167 was considered to have been built by the gods, i.e., was so ancient that its real origin had been completely forgotten". (Bühler, *E. I.* Vol. II, p. 198). To quote again "there were

two temples (*prāsāda*) on the site of the Kaṅkālī mound. One of the two temples existed on the evidence of the very ancient No. 1 of my second series of Mathura inscriptions already in the middle of the second century B.C., while the likewise archaic inscription No. IV of the same series which records the creation of the second temple cannot be later than about the middle of the first century". (*E. I.* Vol. II, p. 319). For an example of the ancient Jaina Stūpa carved in sculpture may be cited a figure given on a cross-bar medallion from the Kaṅkali site (Smith's *Jaina Stūpa*, plate 72, fig. 1, here Fig. 22). Bhandarkar has drawn attention to this edifice as an example of a square Stūpa. He writes, "It is a structure built in horizontal tiers and must be a *Stūpa* as indicated by the heavy sausage-shaped garlands". (*Excavations at Nagarī, Archaeological Memoir* No. 4, p. 136). The structure is surmounted by a Dharma-Chakra. The whole figure is an exact replica of the figure already described (MM. No. 438) as a Dharma-Chakra on Sapta-Bhūmika-Āsana or *Prāsāda*, and this view is further strengthened by comparing the winged lion on the lower medallion of the Buddhist upright with that carved on the reverse medallion of the Kankali tila cross-bar. We know from other specimens of Mathura art that the wheel was a symbol common to both Buddhism and Jainism. The Stūpa likewise was a monument raised by the followers of these two religions for enshrining the relics of their saints. As examples of the Jaina Dharma-Chakra and Stūpa we have reference to the *Wheel and the Relic Memorial* in line 14 of the Hathigumpha cave inscription in the following words :—

तेरसमे च वसे सुपवत-विजय-चक्र-कुमारी-पवते अरहयते पखिण-सं० (सि) तोहे काय-निसीदीयाय यापावकेहि राज-भितिनि चिन-वतानि वास-सितानि ।
[E. I. Vol. XX, p. 80].

i.e. 'In the thirteenth year, on the Kumārī Hill where the wheel of conquest had been well-revolved (i.e. the religion of the Jina had been preached), (he) offers respectfully royal maintenance, China-clothes (silks) and white clothes to (*the monks*) who (*by their austerities*) have extinguished the round of lives, the preachers on the religious life and conducc at the RELIC MEMORIAL". (*Ibid.*, p. 88). Line 15 of this inscription again refers to the Relie Depository (*nisidi*) of the Arhat on the top of the hill. On this hill was set in motion by the Great Patriarch (*Arhat*) the wheel of conquest (*vijaya-chaka*) which we may take to be the same as the Dhamma-Chakka of the Buddhists. On the same spot was raised a Relic memorial, called *Kāya Nisīdī*, which term must be understood as an rquivalent of *Stūpa*. We are famliiar frem many other inscriptions that Niṣadyā (with various forms Niṁsiḍhi, Nishidi, Niśīdhi, Nishiḍhi, Nisīd , etc.) was the common name in the inscriptions of the Maurya and Śuṅga periods for a Stūpa. Ushavadāta, son-in-law of Satrap Nahapāna of the first century B.C. boasts in the Nasika inscriptions that he erected many such buildings (E. I. Vol. II, p. 274, *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XII, p. 99). Here it may not be out of place to recall the following remarks of Dr. Bühler, "These new sculptures from the Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā teach..... and prove that the ancient art of the Jainas did not differ materially from that of the Buddhists. Both sects

used the same ornaments, the same artistic motives and the same sacred symbols, differences occurring chiefly in minor points only. The cause of this agreement is in all probability not that the adherents of one sect imitated those of the other but that *both drew on the national art of India and employed the same artists*" (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 322).

The foregoing statement will allow the conclusion that the railing as a pattern of architectural design was non-sectarian, being commonly employed to embellish the Hindu, Jaina and Budhist monuments, for which we have quoted examples of railings discovered at Nagarī, Mathurā, and Sānchī. The non-denominational nature of the other plastic forms in ancient art is also very evident. It may be said for the Yakshīs and Vṛikshakās that they formed part of a common heritage of art-motifs handed down from the epic period. Females standing under blossoming trees, gathering flowers or indulging in arboreal sports were characteristic of an idyllic inspiration of life. These *Pushpa-bhañjikā* women occur in countless poses on the railings of Bharhut, Sanchi, Mathura and Amaravati and form the chief element in the compositions of older art. We may almost be sure that Pāṇini was referring to these floral sports in his sūtras *Prāchāṁ Krīdāyām* (VI. 2. 74) and *Nityaṁ Krīdā-Jīvikayoḥ* (II. 2, 17), which have been explained by the commentators to regularise forms like *Uddālaka-Pushpa-bhañjikā* (plucking of Uddālaka flowers) and *Vīraṇa-pushpaprachāyikā* (gathering of Vīraṇa flowers), *Śāla-bhañjikā* (gleaning of sāla flowers) and *Tālabhañjikā* (plucking of plam leaves), etc. These were characteristic features of the Prāchya sculpture, here called the ancient National School for the sake of convenience.

Of other pre-Kushāṇa specimens deposited in the Mathura Museum it will be profitable to draw attention to the following selected examples :—

1. Cross-Bar fragment from the Gāyatrī Ṭīlā (MM. 1341), carved on either side with a richly caparisoned elephant mounted by a *mahāvat* and a prince, who appears to be riding out to meet some saint. The finish of the composition is supremely exquiste and bears testimony to the high achievement of Mathura sculptors in the Śuṅga period.

2. Railing pillar No. J. 2 the central portion is octagonal in section. The standing Yakshī wearing elaborate headdress and ornaments, carved in the act of unloosing her girdle, covered with most diaphanous muslin, and standing over a crouching grotesque figure with protruding eyes and erect ears, is a representative example of the Bharhut traditions transplanted at Mathura. A medallion above the female figure represents a man with an umbrella in his left hand who apparently is addressing an assembly of people, depicting a scene in the Mahābodhi Jātaka.

3. Railing pillar No. 586 of Mathura Museum found from Gosna Ṭīlā, three miles north of Mathura. It is a fine specimen of first century B.C. The two complete lotuses engraved on it are perfectly carved, while in the uppermost half resette is carved a Jātaka scene, of which the identification has been proposed by Dr. Foucher. He writes about this pillar :—"Its simple style of decoration precludes any doubt about its belonging to the old

Indian school, free from influence of the Gandhara one, although the easy sitting posture of the man, seen three-quarters, already shows a considerable advance in the technique. We have to deal with the usual type of the Brāhmanical anchoret, known to us through so many replicas and easily recognisable by his heavy chignon, his beard and his short garments. He is seated on a kind of rolled-up mat (*bṛisī*), at the door of his round hut, the walls of which are visibly made of reeds and the roof covered with leaves (*Parṇa-śālā*). His elbows areon his bent knees and his hands extended forward, he is engaged in an earnest conversation with four wild inhabitants of his jungly hermitage, artlessly super-posed in front of him along the rim of the half-medallion, viz., a crow, a dove, a kneeling doe and a coiled snake. "Four monks of the Jetavana convent were one day discussing to know which is the worst evil in this world. Love, said the first, Hunger, said the second. Hate, said the third. Fear, said the fourth. And they quarrelled each upholding his own opinion. Suddenly the Buddha came and asked the subject of their dispute. When each had explained his own idea, the Buddha said, "Your reasons do not go to the core of the matter. All evils come from the fact that we have a body. Love, hunger, hate or enmity, fear of some misfortune as well as all other sufferings are felt by a being only because he has a body. The body is the root and origin of every evil, trouble and care. Selfishness, and its consequence the series of our deaths and rebirths, all that comes from the body. The worst of evils is to have a body. Therefore whosoever wants to escape suffering must seek, by the practice of abstention and abstraction, the final repose to be found in extinction and which is the supreme happiness. In olden days four creatures, which were living together in a cave discussed the same subject. It is irresistible love which is the most dangerous of evils, said the dove. It is hunger which throws one into nets or snares, said the crow. It is envenomed hate, said the snake. It is perpetual fear, said the deer..... "No", said an ascetic, who had been listening to them, "the worst of evils is to have a body". (A. Foucher. On an Old Bas-relief in the Museum at Mathura, *J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. VI, 1920, p. 470). It will not tax our ingenuity to surmise that the four monks of the Jetavana Vihāra once were the four creatures of the jungle, and the Buddha the sage ascetic. This tale is the evident subject of our medallion.

We have said above that besides the stone specimens of the pre-Kushāṇa sculpture we have in the Mathura Museum a large number of terracottas which plentifully corroborate the stylistic and iconographic peculiarities of the old art. These clay moulded objects are of supreme artistic merit and exhibit the same standard of skilful execution as demonstrated by the stone sculptures. In most cases the themes and decorative elements are very much idéntical. The full importance of these art objects may be gleaned from the following observations of Dr. Coomaraswamy: "No less important is a considerable group of Maurya and Śuṅga terracottas of which examples have been found in the lowest, or nearly the lowest, levels at several widely separated sites, extending from Pāṭliputra to Taxila. These moulded plaques and modelled heads and busts represent in most cases a standing female divinity with very elaborate coiffure, dressed in a tunic or nude to the waist, and with a *dhotī* or skirt of diaphanous muslin. Despite the garment special care is taken to reveal the Mount of

Venus in apparent nudity, a tendency slmost equally characteristic of the stone sculptures in the Śuṅga, Andhra and Kushāṇa period.....These types may have behind them a long history ; they may have been votive tablets or auspicious representations of mother goddess and bestowers of fertility and prototypes of Māyā Devī and Lakshmī. Other plaques often in high relief represent male and female couples like the *Mithuna* and *Umā Maheívara* groups of later art. These terracottas have been found at Basārh, Taxila, Bhīṭā, Nagarī, Mathurā, Pāṭilaputra, Kosam and Sankisā. They may range in date from fifth century B.C. to the first century A.D. The more primitive types from Pāṭaliputra and Mathura, especially in respect of the two lateral masses or horns of the headdress, closely approximate to some very ancient examples from Mohenjo-daro.

"The technique of these terracottas is stylistic and almost always accomplished, although made from moulds, few or no duplicates are met with, and there is a great variety of detail. In some cases the figure is endowed with real grace, foreshadowing, as Sir John Marshall remarks, the free and naturalistic development of the succeeding century". (*History of Indian and Indonesian Art*). In the Mathura specimens preserved in the Museum, the lateral horns are very remarkable. We are familiar with the top-knot or the headdress in some of the old Yaksha figures (*cf.* Vaiśravaṇa Yaksha image from Kaṅkālī Ṭilā, now preserved in the Lucknow Museum. The headdress is developed into two high horns, stamped with rosettes, or a central big knot with an appended volute. Dr. A. Banerji-Shastri is disposed to connect these primitive types with the *Opasa* and *Kaparda* of the Vedic period, in the case of his Buxar terracottas. (*J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 1-3). This provides an additional proof for an inherited common stock of very antique forms in the old school of Indian Art. The village-potter (*Grāma-Kulāla*) being an integral part of the art-economy of ancient India, and claiming a place equal to that of the mason and stone-cutter for the high standard of his art, was able to produce faience objects which by their highly finished quality and manifold variety compared most favourably with the best sculptural productions of that age. Most common forms are those of plaques depicting females engaged in toilet scenes, holding a mirror in the right or left hand decorated with elaborate ornaments, and standing either nude or dressed in finely creased diaphanous drapery, Yakshīs occupied with floral sports or holding lotuses in the hand, or very often the male and the female treated together in the characteristic pose of Dampatīs, modelled with great delicacy and skill. A curious but very archaic type of female form is that with bird or pig-like features ornamented with very heavy earrings and a collar, often in hard gray clay with or without slip. Pot-bellied and deformed dwarfs serving as Atlantes (*vāhana*) or playing on musical instruments are also found. Apart from this general idea conveyed here a detailed description concerning these archaic terracottas discovered from Mathura and ranging in date from the pre-Mauryan to the Śuṅga period is reserved for treatment in a separate article.

Fig. 64. Sānchī Guardian Yaksha

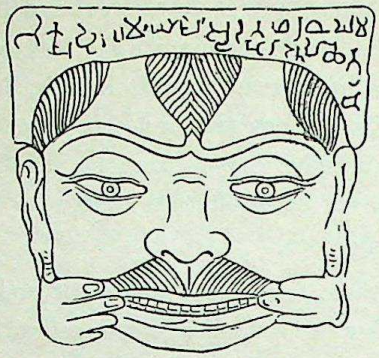

Fig. 65. Head of Ahichchhatra Yaksha.

Fig. 66. Mathura Yaksha

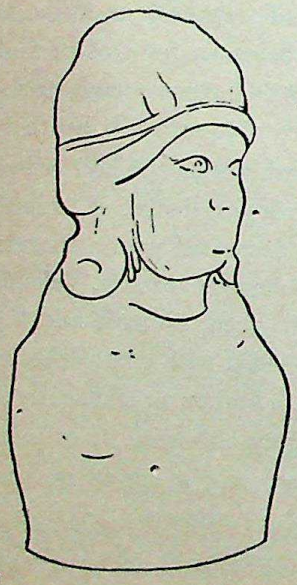

Fig. 67. A New Yaksha Image in the Mathura Museum.

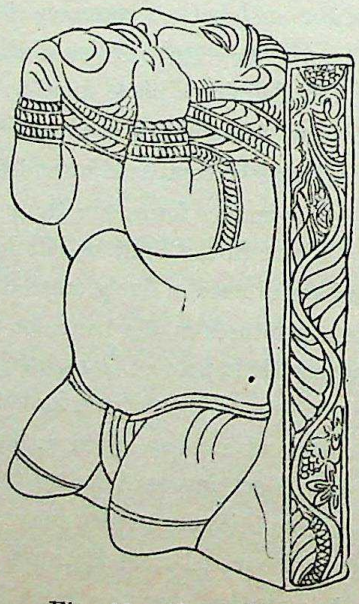

Fig. 68. Front View of Ahichchhatra Yaksha.

Fig. 69. Bombay Yaksha.

APPENDIX

FOUR NEW YAKSHA STATUES

I. Bombay Yaksha

In the compound of the Victoria and Albert Museum[1] Bombay stands the lower half portion of the colossal image. It represents a standing male figure now preserved from the girdle below. The image is carved in the round but the main effect is frontal like that in the Parkham Yaksha image. On the proper right of the main image is a female figure standing in three-quarter profile. Similarly, on proper left is a highly grotesque figure of a Yaksha carrying on his shoulders an equally grotesque female figure.

Main Figure: The right leg is but forward, and the left is slightly bent. The figure is wearing a *dhotī* with a long fold between the legs touching the ground and fastened by a narrow ribbon the two loose ends of which are knotted on the left thigh. A heavy flat scarf is arranged in front of the legs in a conspicuous loop similar to that of the flat pendant necklaces. The long ends of the scarf are indicated on the back. Near the left leg of the male figure is a fluted *āmalaka*-like fragment of some object which might have been a double-headed *vajra* (Fig. 69).

The female attendant on proper right: A female figure is standing on right in a position forming an acute angle with the main figure. She wears a head-dress secured with a band, ear-pendants, a torque with a taurine symbol in the centre, a scarf, a breast-band (*stana-paṭṭa*), armlets and wristlets. A pair of loose locks is shown falling on each shoulder. The drapery consists of a *dhotī* with lines of folds marked in relief, but nudity is indicated. She is also wearing a girdle, heavy anklets and a tight cylindrical ornament round each leg above the anklets. The flexed right arm is held near the stomach, grasping something which is now broken. The left hand raised to shoulder, is also damaged.

The male attendant on left: The male attendant on the proper left side stands facing towards the back. He has a heavy chignon on the head from which a conspicuous projection tapers behind horizontally. There are round ear-rings in the cloven ear-lobes and a small necklet round the neck. He held in the right hand an indistinct object now broken. A remarkable feature is a *nāga* serving as wristlet round the wrist of the right hand. This is the upper figure, being carried on the shoulders of a grotesque lion-faced dwarf protruding eyes and manes shown on the back of the head. The gaping mouth of the lion shows

[1] Since writing the above the image has been presented by the Municipal Corporation, Bombay to the National Museum, New Delhi, to which place it has now been removed.

protruding fangs and tongue. The head of the Atlantes Yaksha is abnormally big (15″ high) in proportion to its dwarfish body (24″). He is holding in his hands the legs of the figure mounted on his shoulders.

Size: The measurements of the different parts of the image are as follows:

Pedestal, 3′3″×1′6″×2″ thick; front height 3′6″ including pedestal; height at the back, 4′; height of the female figure on right, 3′4″; height of the grotesque Yaksha attendant with the figure he is carrying, 3′4″; girth at the heads of the two attendant figures, 7′10″; height of the *vajra*-like object, 11″ (as now preserved) but 7″ from the tip to the lower part of its middle band, so that the complete object measured 14″.

Identification: The main figure seems to have represented a Yaksha image of the class of the Parkham Yaksha. Both in its treatment and in subject it is similar to the ancient Yaksha statues.

Find-place: The records of the Museum show it to have been found at Elephanta, but the entry is not definitely vouchsafed to be correct. It is possible that sometime in the last century the image was collected from one of the old sites in Western India, possibly Sopārā. In the list of ancient Yakshas compiled in the *Mahāmāyurī* four Yakshas are named in Western India, viz. Vishṇu in Dvārkā, Asaṅga in Bharukachchha, Vīra in Karahāṭaka and Pālaka in Vanavāsī. (The Geographical Contents of Mahāmāyūrī, *JUPHS.*, XV, Pt. II, pp. 27-29).

Before the advent of the images of regular Brahmanical gods and goddesses there was a wide-spread belief in Yaksha worship and almost each region possessed its tutelary Yaksha. Some of these images have already come to light and others may still be explored in course of time. For example, we have found at Mathura the colossal Yaksha image at Parkham, another bigger image at Baroda village in Mathura district, a third similar Yaksha in the Noh village about three miles from Bharatpur, and lastly a female Yakshī image now in worship at a village called Jhīnga-kā-Nagrā, a few miles from Mathura.

II. Palwal Yaksha

The statue consists of the head and bust of a colossal Yaksha image of red sandstone. It was found at Palwal in Gurgaon District in 1914 and is now deposited in the Provincial Museum, Lucknow (0.107). The figure is wearing on the head a conical turban with tiered folds, big round discs in cloven ear-lobes, a double flat crescent-shaped torque, a flat triangular necklace, armlets with triple vertical projections and four heavy wristlets. The right hand is raised towards the shoulder and holds a conch-like tapering object, now mutilated. There are traces of a scarf looped on right elbow. On the back are shown pendant tassels of the necklace. The style of the turban, the torque and the necklace and the armlets with feathered projections seen in the side view, all point to the image being an early Yaksha

type that may be assigned to the early Śuṅga period, about second century B.C. The object in the right hand is unfortunately not very distinct and therefore the identification with Kubera is far from certain. It adds one more example to the colossal Yaksha statues found in the Mathura region.

III. Rajghat Yaksha

This colossal statute was found at the old site of Rajghat near Banaras at the time of the railway dig in 1940. It has now been removed to the Bharat Kala Bhavan. Its dia-mensions are ht. 5′×width 1′11″×girth round the stomach 6′5″ (Fig. 41).

The statue is somewhat strange, viz. representing a triple image which I propose to identify only tentatively as Trimukha Yaksha. On a three-sided block of stone, which has a square pedestal below, each side is carved with a standing male figure in bold relief. One of the side figures is better preserved than others. The figures are rather dwarfish in stature, plump, and have their hands lifted up as in Atlantes Yaksha figures. The eyes are large and bulging. The facial expression is that of a good-humoured fellow with laughter in the cheeks. The head is covered with a high turban of which the details are not well-preserved. In between the legs in front, there seems to be a prop-like object, of which the purpose is not clear. There is no trace of any drapery on the lower legs, but the bust seems to be covered with a *kurtā*-like costume falling to the knees. This is rather unusual as all other Yaksha images wear *dhotīs* on the lower portion of the body. Stylistically, the image seems to belong to the early Śuṅga period. The whole formula of a triple figure, the dimen-sions, its free standing nature and facial expression seem to suggest that we have to deal here with one of those early cult images, which represented the local tutelary deities called Yakshas. Other important examples of Yaksha images are well known.

The *Mahābhārata* (Sabhāparva) gives a list of Yakshas present in the assembly of Kubera, but much more important and full is the list of Yakshas in the Buddhist work called *Mahāmāyurī*. Literary tradition shows that each region had its local Yaksha for whose worship appropriate images were installed. These stone images and the tradition of worship cannot have disappeared altogether and it is very likely that patient search into local history and archaeology will reveal traces of Yaksha worship and statuary in many other places. Fortunately, the gap for Banaras is filled by this image. I have not been able to find up to now a proper identification of this figure in the lists of Yakshas mentioned above, and the subject requires still further investigation.

IV. A new Yaksha image in the Mathura Museum

This image appears as No. E9 in Dr. Vogel's catalogue of the Mathura Museum (*Catalogue of the Mathura Museum*, p. 108). Pandit Radha Krishna found this sculpture let into the wall of a house inside the Bharatpur Gate and secured it for the Museum. The

bust (ht. 2′4″) shows a male figure wearing a conspicuous turban and heavy ear-rings. The carving on the face and bust is much defaced (Fig. 67). During my last visit to the Mathura Museum, the image attracted my attention on stylistic grounds and I now feel convinced that it is one of the early colossal images assignable to the Śuṅga period. The high turban with a rolled-upend as well as the ear-rings and the facial expression put it in that group of early images, which have been found at Mathura and classified as Yakshas.

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16. DHYANI BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS

The Buddhists believe in a Pantheon consisting of the five Dhyānī Buddhas and five Bodhisattvas emanating from the former. The Dhyānī Buddhas, also known as the Divine Buddhas, are of a passive nature in the process of creation. They remain merged in peaceful meditation and voluntarily restrain themselves from directly associating in the act of creation. They therefore represent the principle of rest in Buddhist philosophy. To create is the duty of their emanations, the Divine Bodhisattvas, who as their counterparts are mainly responsible for controlling and guiding the dynamic aspect of the cosmic forces. There are in the main five Bodhisattvas corresponding to the five Dhyānī Buddhas. The five Dhyānī Buddhas might have owed their origin to the eternity of the five senses and the five elements, with which they are severally connected. According to Advaya Vajra, a writer of the eleventh century, they took their origin from the five Buddhist Skandhas, or rather they were the embodiments of the Skandhas which were held by Lord Buddha to be the constituents of a Being. (Cf. *Buddhist Iconography* by B. Bhattacharya).

To the five Dhyānī Buddhas connected with the five senses it was natural that a sixth should have been added in the capacity of one presiding over mind, and as such an embodiment of the five senses collectively. According to the traditions developed in the old Vedic schools mind is the sovereign of the five Prāṇas. The five Prāṇas were identical with the five senses in the orthodox religious schools, and it is no wonder if the Buddhists also worked on the same solid foundations. To impart a symmetrical character to the Pantheon, the five Dhyānī Buddhas were connected in course of time by the Buddhist thinkers with the five *mudrās* or poses of hands, which the great Sage, Gautama Buddha, had used on different occasions and which consequently were used in Buddhist art to symbolise the great events of his life. Or still further, on account of the number five, they came to be related with the five *vargas* or groups of consonantal mutes, *viz.*, क्, च्, ट्, त्, and प्, and similarly with the five seasons and the five quarters (*viz.*, the four cardinal points *plus* the centre).

'It has already been said that the five Dhyānī Buddhas are passive and in deep meditation. For purposes of creation they have each an active counterpart called Boddhisattva. These Bodhisattvas, in successive ages, uphold the creation and then retire and merge again into their original sources. The Bodhisattvas exert their influence over the universe in successive ages through the most exalted of human beings called *Mānushī Buddhas* or Buddhas incarnate. They are a sort of human agent to the Bodhisattvas'. [N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, p. 18]. Both the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists believe in a list of twenty-four past Buddhas, each

Fig. 70. Bodhisattva Torso with Suparṇas in the head

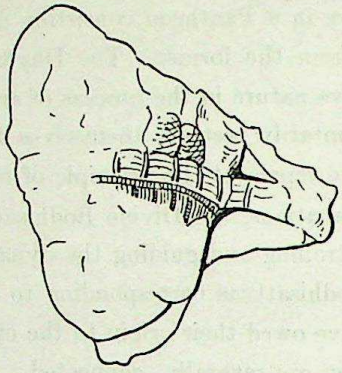


Fig. 71. Bodhisattva head with Garuḍas

Fig. 72 Head of Avalokiteś-vara

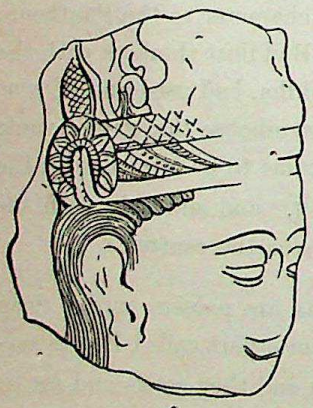


Fig. 73. Bodhisattva Head with two Buddhas in Crest

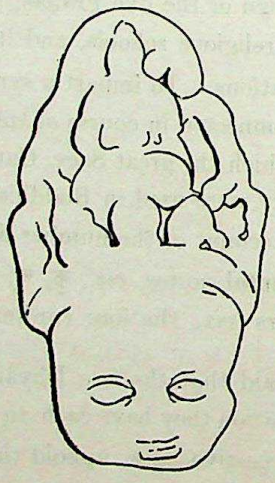


Fig. 74. Bodhisattva Head with Dhyānī Buddha

Fig. 75. Bodhisattva Head from the Collection of R. B. Radha Krishana

having a peculiar Bodhi tree. Of these the last seven *Tathāgatas* are designated by the Mahāyānists as Mānushī or mortal Buddhas, with Maitreya, the coming Buddha, added as the eighth and last of all. The Mānushī Buddhas were also made to fit in within the framework of the Dhyānī Buddhas and their Bodhisattvas.

We thus get the panel of the Dhyānī Buddhas, their corresponding Dhyānī Bodhisattvas, and the Mānushī Buddhas, all these together making up a *triad*, which in import and significance possessed great similarity with the philosophical Hindu *triad*. The meditative and detached Dhyānī Buddhas represented the *prajñāna-ghana or adhyātma* aspect, the active Bodhisattvas the *prāṇika* or *adhidaiva* aspect, and the mortal Buddhas the *ādhibhautika* or incarnate aspect of the Absolute. On the stable foundations of this Trinity a host of gods and goddesses were evolved in later Buddhism, and the scheme of the five Dhyānī Buddhas with the related Bodhisattvas is considered to be the most convenient synthesis for introducing order into an otherwise complex pantheon. The following chart illustrates the Divine Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas and the mortal Buddhas in proper relationship to one another and also to the different *mudrās*, vehicles, *skandhas* and position in a *Stūpa* :—

	ध्यानी बुद्ध	बोधिसत्त्व	मानुषीबुद्ध	मुद्रा	वाहन	स्कन्ध	Position in the Stūpa	वर्ग	Crest sign
1.	वैरोचन	सामन्तभद्र	क्रकुच्छन्द	धर्मचक्र	Dragons	रूप	Centre	कवर्ग	Discus
2.	अक्षोभ्य	वज्रपाणि	कनकमुनि	भूमिस्पर्श	Elephants	विज्ञान	East	चवर्ग	Vajra
3.	रत्नसम्भव	रत्नपाणि	काश्यप	वरद	Lions	वेदना	South	तवर्ग	Jewel
4.	अमिताभ	पद्मपाणि अवलोकितेश्वर	गौतम	समाधि	Peacocks	संज्ञा	West	टवर्ग	Lotus
5.	अमोघसिद्धि	विश्वपाणि	मैत्रेय	अभय	Garuḍas	संस्कार	North	पवर्ग	विश्ववज्र Double thunderbolt

Early References

The above Pantheon was not perfected all at once. We do not find the mention of the five Dhyānī Buddhas in the literature of the Mahāyāna Buddhists prior to the time of Indra Bhūti (cir. 700—750 A.D.). We meet with none of them in the works of Aśvaghosha (c. 1st century A.D.), Nāgārjuna (2nd cent. A.D.) and his disciple Āryadeva. We have evidence that during A.D. 148—170 the *Sukhāvatī Vyūha* or the *Amitāyus Sūtra* was translated into Chinese. This *Sūtra* mentions for the first time the name of Amitābha, and his other name Amitāyus, who resides in the Sukhāvatī or Akanishṭha heaven, where he remains in constant meditation and where he is believed to have brought forth the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara into existence. The smaller recension of this *Amitāyus Sūtra* which was also translated into Chinese between A.D. 384—417, mentions two more names, of Akshobhya as a *Tathāgata* and Mañjuśrī as a Bodhisattva. It may be noted, however, that Fahian mentions the names of Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and Maitreya ; Hiuen Tsang the names of Avalokiteśvara, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and also Padmapāṇi, Vaiśravaṇa, Sākya Bodhisattva and Hārītī. The latter also refers to many saints deified as Bodhitttvas, *e.g.*, Aśvaghosha, Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Sumedhas and others. He refers to many of the previous Buddhas also. It-sing, another devout Buddhist traveller (A.D. 671—695), mentions Avalokiteśvara, Amitāyus or Amitābha, Maitreya and Mañjuśrī. [Cf. B. Bhattacharya, *Buddhist Iconography*].

It is evident from this that the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara Padmapāṇi and his spiritual father Amitābha or Amitāyus were the most ancient and popular of the Divine Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Of the mortal Buddhas, besides Gautama, Maitreya is most frequently mentioned, both Fahian and Hiuen Tsang making reference to him. It may be because Avalokiteśvara presides over the present aeon, the *Bhadra-kalpa*, and Maitreya is to incarnate as the future Buddha in the next *kalpa*, that the worship of these two besides Gautama, the Buddha of the present age, was more popular than others.

Evidence of Art

We wish to discuss here especially the evidence that is available in Mathura sculpture, relating to the Dhyānī Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Dr. Vogel wrote in his Introduction (p. 38) to the *Catalogue of the Mathura Museum* :—

'The Mathura sculptures, however, point to the fact that during the Kushāṇa period this Bodhisattva cult was not yet developed. The statuettes, No. A 43 and 68 of the Mathurā Museum are the only figures which can be identified with Maitreya. I do not know of any representation of Avalokiteśvara, not to speak of other less popular Boddhisattvas. Even these well known groups of a seated Buddha between two standing Bodhisatttvas, so common in later Buddhist art, do not seem to occur at Mathurā. This is the more remarkable, as such triads were already known in Gandhāra'.

But since the above was written in 1910, important evidence has accumulated which warrants us to revise the above view in regard to the origin and early development of the Bodhisattva cult at Mathurā. There are nine sculptures, all products of the Mathurā school, which I came across during my recent compiling of an uptodate Catalogue of the antiquities in the Mathura Museum and my studies relating thereto. They are discussed below :—

1. Standing Bodhisattva [B. 82, deposited in the Lucknow Museum] :—Completely preserved figure on a railing pillar. Halo of scalloped border round the head. He wears heavy earpendants, a flat torque and a flat triangular necklace as are found on the image of Parkham Yaksha and on the colossal Bodhisattvas of Mathura. A scarf thrown on the shoulders and a *dhoti* with a girdle tied over it, are also similar to other Mathurā figures of the Kushāṇa period. The right hand is raised to shoulder in *abhayamudrā*, and the left hand holds an *amṛita-ghaṭa*. The *mukuṭa* on the head is the chief item of interest, as it shows the effigy of a Buddha seated cross-legged with right hand in *abhayamudrā* and the left holding *saṅghāṭī*. The image is undoubtedly of the Kushāṇa period, about the 2nd century A.D.

This image is illustrated by Dr. Coomaraswamy in his *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, plate XXI, fig. 78. It is wrongly described as Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara on p. 233 of that book. Dr. Coomaraswamy published it again as fig. 17 in his well known essay entitled 'The Origin of the Buddha Image' [The *Art Bulletin*, 1927], where the figure is correctly identified as Bodhisattva Maitreya (p. 38). Even if the miniature figure of the spiritual Buddha in the crest of the crown were absent, this image would easily be identified as Maitreya on account of the presence of the *amṛita* vase, which is invariably associated with Maitreya in Kushāṇa art (Cf. Maitreya Images, A. 43, A. 68, in Dr. Vogel's *Catalogue*]. The *abhayamudrā* of the right hand of the Dhyānī Buddha, however, leads additional confirmation to the identification, and according to the table given before, the Dhyānī Buddha should be called Amoghasiddhi. That the cult of the Dhyānī Buddha in respect to Maitreya had been established as early as the second century A.D. during the Kushāṇa period is proved beyond doubt by this image.

2. Upper Fragment of a Bodhisattva head [No. 2367, now deposited in the Mathurā Museum, originally obtained by me from Mahadeva Ghat, Sadar Bazar, Mathura] :—Fortunately, enough portion is preserved to reveal the true character of the image. The Dhyānī Buddha is seated in *padmāsana* in *abhayamudrā*, and has a circular halo of segmented border. On both sides there is a worshipper standing with folded hands, and each has a halo round the head. The composition and style of the figures are extraordinarily similar to those of the group on the top of the relic casket from Kanishka's *Stūpa* at Peshawar. We may be justified in identifying the two attendant figures, whose divine rank is beyond doubt, as Indra and Brahmā. The Dhyānī Buddha is without a lotus-seat. This piece also must belong to the same period as the Bodhisattva Maitreya given above. The Dhyānī Buddha also on account of the *abhayamudrā* should be identified as Amoghasiddhi. This head was described in the

Ann. Bib. of Indian Archaeology for 1934, p. 14 [V. S. Agrawala, *Acquisitions to the Mathurā Museum*].

3. Head and Bust of Bodhisattva [No. 2361, obtained from Dig Darwaza, Mathura ; now deposited in the Curzon Museum. Material red sandstone. Age about 2nd century A.D.]. There are traces of a halo at the back. Loose locks falling on both shoulders. The ornaments are the same as on the Bodhisattva Image No. A. 45 in the Mathurā Museum [Dr. Vogel's Catalogue, Plate X], *viz.*, pearl string round the neck, flat torque, profuse pearl necklaces held below with makara-mukha clasps, chain and pendant *padaka*, amulet string (rakshā-vīṭikā sūtra) and *gāruḍa keyūra* on the arms. The head is slightly inclined to the right in a position in which the gaze is directed towards the left arm, which is thrown obliquely towards the stomach. [Fig. 70]

The *mukuṭa*, again, is of more than usual interest. It has a projecting central rosette and is held fast by a metallic fillet. The rosette is occupied by a facing Garuḍa squatting with spreadout wings. Surmounting the fillet is a row of three smaller Garuḍas on the right and another similar row on the left. The total of Garuḍa figures thus comes to seven, which of course must have been a symbolic number. According to the Bodhisattva doctrine Garuḍas serve as the vehicle of Bodhisattva Maitreya. In that case this and similar other images with Garuḍa emblem in the crest must be representing Maitreya. The symbolism of *the Sapta Suparṇas* may go back to much older Vedic tradition, and it may well have been adopted as a counterpart of the symbol of the seven Nāga hoods common in Buddhist art. The *Suparṇas* represented the celestial powers of Light, and the Nāgas the titanic powers of Darkness. The Sun was sopken of as the Great Suparṇa, and his seven rays or the seven vital airs were symbolised as the *Sapta Suparṇas*. The eternal feud between the Suparṇa and the Nāga has also been found represented in Mathura art of the Kushāṇa period. [Smith's *Jaina Stūpa*, plate XXV, fig. 1]. The *sapta-suparṇa* Bodhisattvas therefore might have represented enlightened Beings, *i.e.*, Buddhas, in whom Pervfect Wisdom had triumphed over Ignorance or Darkness.

4. Bodhisattva Head [No. 510, acquired in February 1915 from the site of Katra Keshavadeva, deposited in the Mathura Museum ; material grey white stone, about 3rd century A.D.]. The head and crown are similar to No. 3 above, and the arrangement of the *Garuḍa* figures is also alike, though not so well preserved. There is a continuous pearl string held in the beak of all the *Garuḍa* figures and fastened at both ends with small rosettes attached to the crown. [Fig. 71]

5. Bodhisattva head preserved in tact above the *nāsā mūla sūtra*. This head is illustrated by Dr. Coomaraswamy as fig. 21 in plate VI of his *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*. On page 230 he writes—'male head from Mathurā (fragment). Mottled red sand stone. Maurya or *Śuñga*'. The present whereabouts of this antiquity are not given, but it is likely thta like the head in fig. 20, it forms part of Dr. Coomaraswamy's private collection. It is

incorrect to take it as of the Maurya or Śuṅga period. On stylistic grounds this head must belong to the Kushāṇa period, being similar in treatment to numerous other Kushāṇa Bodhisattva heads.

The head is illustrated by Dr. Coomaraswamy in three-quarters profile. There is a band above the fillet. In the centre we notice a crescent, and a row of seven *Garuḍa* figures on the proper left side. Obviously a similar line of *Garuḍas* adorned the right side. The crescent is absolutely a unique feature so far as Mathura art is concerned. Mr. Hargreaves, however, noted its provenance in Gandhāra specimens of Buddha and Bodhisattva figures. He writes, 'The most interesting of the group are Nos. 835 and 858. Both show a seated Buddha in the centre. with hands folded in the attitude of meditation, dhyāna, and with a number of smaller standing Buddha figures at an angle on either side, while a noticeable feature of both is the crescent moon above the central Buddha's head. Nos. 850 and 859, having a Bodhisattva with three radiating figures on either side, are worthy of attention as the former has a crescent[1] above the head and one of the radiating figures bears a trident'. [H. Hargreaves, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Peshawar Museum*, p. 86]. It would be interesting to know the age of the Gandhāra specimens and also to institute a comparison with our figure. But pending good photos and further details of the Peshawar figures we must not venture a definite identification.

6. Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi or Avalokiteśvara head [No. 2336, deposited in the Mathurā Museum. Reproduced in Plate IV, C, and described on p. 14 of the *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology* for 1934, Vol. IX.] The Dhyānī Buddha in the centre of the crown is seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus, and has both hands in *dhyāna mudrā*. He wears an elaborate *saṅghāṭī* covering both shoulders. There is a scalloped halo at the back of his head. There are three *Garuḍas* on his right and three on the left, above the fillet fastening the crown over the ringlets. There is an ūrṇā dot between the eyebrows. The material is red sand stone at the back with a patch of grey white colour in front.

This Avalokiteśvara head is almost an ancient duplicate of a similar Avalokiteśvara head in the Sanchi Museum [B. 30, Plate XV of the *Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sonchi*, also p. 38]' Both these heads cannot be later than the 3rd century A.D. It is practically certain that a group of Mathurā artists was working at Sanchi during the Kushāṇa period. Images in Mathurā stone and style have been discovered at this site [Cf. *Sanchi Museum Catalogue*, A. 83]. Specially interesting is the inscribed pedestal of the image of Bodhisattva Maitreya. On the front of its pedestal is a figure of Bodhisattva Maitreya seated cross-legged, wearing usual ornaments including amulet string, and holding a small *amṛita-ghaṭa* in left hand. [A. 84, Sanchi Museum,, photo on plate VIII (b) of A.S.R., 1912-13, Pt. I [Fig. 72]

7. Bodhisattva head [No. 2573, obtained by me in 1935, from the village of Kota—Chhanora on the Delhi road about 3 miles from Mathura] Material, spotted red sandstone of

darker colour. Early Gupta period. :—The middle portion of the crown above the head, nose and chin are damaged. The hair is held by a fillet, and above it is a double garland, all three held together on either ends by lotus medallions. On proper right side surmounting the upper garland band, is a *Garuḍa* figure just above the lotus clasp. Next to it is a Buddha figure seated cross-legged between two dwarf trees, the left of which is lost. There is then a gap of 8″ on account of the wearing off of the surface. On the proper left side is again a Buddha figure, with one dwarf tree and one *Garuḍa* figure on its left. Between the two Buddha figures there is room, exactly enough for three more Buddha figures flanked by trees. It is probable that in all there were five Buddhas seated in *padmāsana* between two *Garuḍas* on the crown of the Bodhisattva's head. Dr. B. Bhattacharya remarks in his book, *Buddhist Iconography*, that the images of Maitreya sometimes bear the figures of the five Dhyānī Buddhas on the aureole behind them. In that case this would represent the head of Bodhisattva Maitreya, carved in the Mathurā art of the Gupta period, incorporating in it elements of later iconographic evolution. [Fig. 73]

8. Bodhisattva head [No. 1944, purchased from Major Bridge in Mathura Cantt., and now deposited in the Museum. Material spotted red sand stone. Gupta period, about 5th—6th century A.D.] :—The head is much water-worn. It shows in the crest the effigy of a spiritual Buddha seated in *padmāsana*, with right hand suspended below in an attitude which cannot be deciphered at present. The Buddha is flanked by two respectant lions, who according to the table of the Dhyānī Buddhas serve as vehicles of the Divine Buddha Ratnasambhava. It is therefore probable that this head belonged to an image either of the Bodhisasattva Ratnapāṇi or his mortal Buddha Kāśyapa. That the images of Kāśyapa Buddha were carved at Mathurā as early as the Kushāṇa period, is borne out by a recent find mentioning the name of the Kāśyapa Buddha (described elsewhere in this book), in Kushāṇa Brāhmī characters. [Fig. 74]

9. Boddhisattva head :—This head is neither deposited in the Mathurā Museum, nor the present provenance of it is known. I have recovered a photo of it from the collection of photos left behind by the late R. B. Pt. Radha Krishna. On the back of it I find the following entry :—

No. 383, Ht. 8″, Weight 2½ seers or 5 lbs. Price £10.

It is obvious that the owner sold it away to some museum or private collector. The photo, however, is very clear. We see in the high crown a Divine Buddha seated in *pddmāsana* on a lotus seat, and having a prominent round halo at the back of half the body. The Buddha wears an elaborate robe covering both shoulders. The left hand holds the *saṅghāṭī*, while the right one is held in *varada mudrā*. On either side of the Buddha is a lion standing rampant on the fillet, facing in opposite directions, and holding pearl festoons in the mouth. From the attitude of the right hand and the lions, the Dhyānī Buddha can be identified with Ratnasambhava as in No. 1944. This Buddha figure must be assigned to the Gupta period. [Fig. 75]

The above nine antiquities furnish valuable evidence for a proper study of the beginnings and growth of the Dhyānī Buddha and Boddhisattva cult in the philosophical schools of the Mahāyāna Buddhists at Mathura. We are well aware from the extended studies of Dr. Coomaraswamy that Mathura took a leading part in the origin and development of the Buddha image [*vide* his essay on the Origin of the Buddha Image]. It is therefore in the fitness of things that the creative and prolific genius of her artists should have been employed to carve also the various Bodhisattvas who appeared with the rise of Mahāyānism. The available specimens from Mathurā include the following special classes of Buddha images :

1. Images of Gautama Buddha seated under a *pīpal* tree in *padmāsana*, wearing no ornaments, but styled as 'Bodhisattva' in the epigraph on them, *e.g.*, A. 1 from Katra.

2. Image of the Buddha, Śākyamuni, similar to the above, but styled as 'Buddha', *e.g.*, A. 2 from Anyor.

3. Freestanding Bodhisattvas, of colossal type and muscular built, carved in the round, like the Sarnath Bodhisattva of the year 3 of Kanishka's reign. Compare also the massively built standing Bodhisattva No. A. 40 in the Mathurā Museum, wearing dhoti, scarf, girdle, torque and flat necklace like the Parkham Yaksha.

4. Life size statue of freestanding Buddhas, built as above, but not wearing ornaments, *e.g.*, A. 63 of the Mathurā Museum.

5. Seated and standing Bodhisattvas wearing an amulet string along with other ornaments. Cf. A. 45 and A. 46 of the Mathurā Museum.

6. Seated Buddhas wearing elaborated drapery covering both shoulders, as A. 18 and A. 21 etc., evidently influenced by Gandhara specimens.

7. Friezes showing a panel of 'Sarva Buddhas', or seven Buddhas or sometimes eight including Maitreya. Cf. I. 7 ; 1. 37. Similar rows of Buddhas with attendants are found in the Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhara.

8. Statues of Maitreya with the distinguishing symbol of the *amṛita ghṭa*, which are common at Mathura. Compare A. 43, A. 68.

9. Statues of the previous Buddhas, which have no distinguishing marks, their identity being revealed by the inscribed labels on their pedestals. Two such images have been discovered so far in the art of Mathura, *viz.*,

(*a*) Dīpaṅkara Buddha preserved in the Lucknow Museum, B. 22. Originally found from the bed of the Yamunā with an inscription of the early Gupta period.

(*b*) Image of Kāśyapa Buddha recently found at Mathurā. Kāsyapa was the mortal Buddha related to the Dhyānī Buddha Ratnasambhava. This image is of the Kushāṇa period, though the two heads of Ratnasambhava are of the Gupta period.

10. Images of the Dhyānī Buddha-Bodhisattvas. Of this group heads relating to the last three Divine Buddhas only, *viz.*, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi, have so far been found. In terms of the Buddhist Pantheon, they are respectively connected with Kāśyapa, Gautama and Maitreya, the three Buddhas who are also known independently from other specimens at Mathura.

The above account reveals a vastly complicated background behind the Buddha iconography of the Kushāṇa school, in which both indigenous as well as extraneous influences played a considerable part. For a religious history of Buddhism as reconstructed from its Iconography, the early school of Mathura sculpture provides valuable and ample material which must be minutely studied before definite conclusions can be arrived at. A *Corpus* of all Buddha figures found in Mathura art will be of the utmost importance in solving some of the knottiest problems in relation to the origins of Buddhist iconography.

17. A NEW BODHISATTVA AND A BACCHANALIAN GROUP FROM MATHURĀ

The sculptors of Mathura took their cue from the ancient art schools of Sānchī and Bharhut for the symbols, decorative motifs, and patterns of architecture. They also vigorously assimilated the foreign art forms assembled in the phenomenal culture complex brought about by the introduction of the Iranian and Hellenistic elements into Indian life. The ancient indigenous art heritage was carried forward with an exceptionally prolific enrichment of its contents by the artists of the Śaka-Kushāṇa epoch.

About two and a half miles to the south-west of Mathurā city is situated the ancient village of Madhuvan-Maholi. About two furlongs outside the Maholi village towards Mathurā city is a group of old mounds of considerable dimensions.

Recently, in the first week of July 1938, an image of colossal size came to light from one of the above mounds (Fig. 76). The leg stumps disclosing themselves first to view led to the eventual discovery of the whole statue by the villagers. It was subsequently taken possession of on behalf of the Government and removed to the Mathurā Museum. The height of the image from the feet to the head is 8′-3″ or in all 9′-6″ including the tenon by which it was at one time fixed in its brick pedestal. The image is carved in the round and made of the spotted red sandstone of Mathurā. The right hand which was most probably held in the attitude of protection (*abhayamudrā*) is broken away. The left hand holds the drapery at the waist. The figure is draped in the Buddha's usual *tri-chīvara*, leaving the right shoulder bare, with the lower garment reaching down to a little below the knee-joint, held at the waist by a knotted girdle. Between the feet there is a prominent cluster of lotus buds surmounting a coiled lotus garland. On the exterior side of the left leg is a dwarf Aśoka tree. The head of the Buddha is of the *shaven* type. The *ushṇīsha* protuberance is broken away leaving a shallow depression in the skull. There is a faint *ūrṇā* dot between the eye-brows, and the earlobes are prominently elongated. There are also traces of a halo at the back.

An adequate idea of the style and appearance of the new discovery can be had by making a reference to the well known colossal Bodhisattva statue found at Sārnāth (ht. 9′-5″) which is inscribed in the year 3 of Kanishka and was established at the place of the Buddha's *chaṅkrama* at Vārāṇasī by friar Bala, who was most probably a resident of Mathurā. A similar free standing colossal Bodhisattva statue of Mathurā red sandstone was discovered by General Cunningham during 1862-63 from the ruins of ancient Śrāvastī in Gonda district which is also inscribed and was established by the same Bhikshu Bala, a master of the Tripiṭaka. General Cunningham felt satisfied that the Śrāvastī colossus must have been transported from Mathurā. (*Arch. Survey Report*, Vol. I, page 339). Thus a family likeness between these three colossal Bodhisattva images is established.

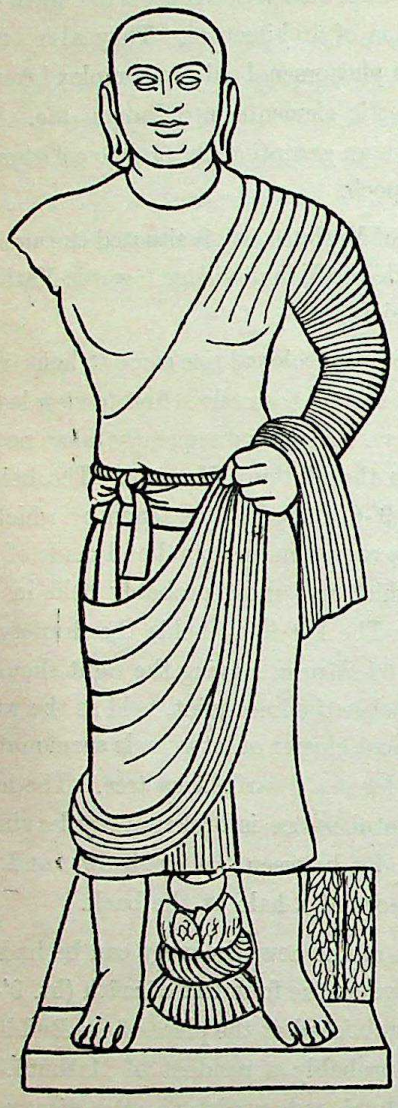


Fig. 76. Maholi Bodhisattva

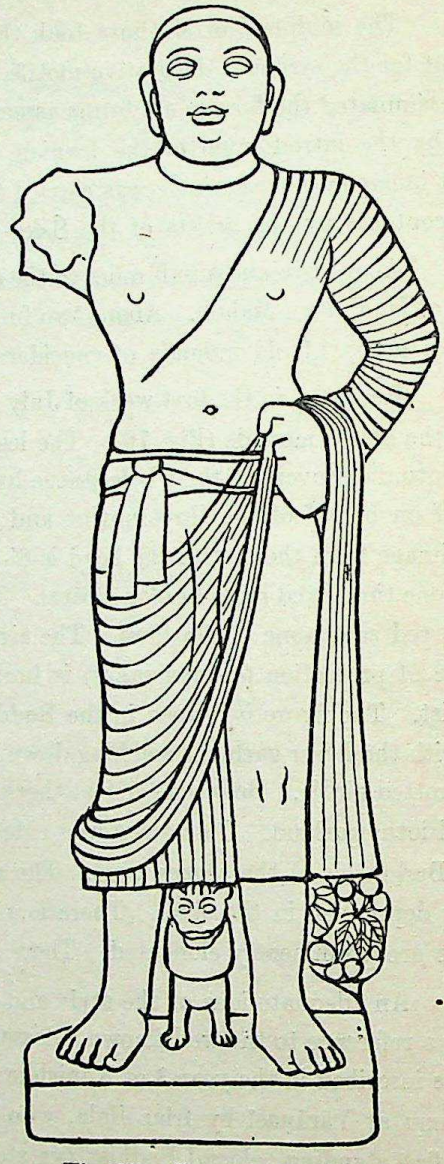


Fig 77. Sarnath Bodhisattva

Unlike the other two statues the Maholi Bodhisattva bears no inscription either on the pedestal or on the main body of the image. But a search for the broken pedestal brought to light a piece of stone (10″×4″) bearing four lines of Brāhmī inscription which was found sticking in mud to the pedestal at its side. It is dated in the year 92 and states that a monk named Grahadāsika, resident of the Khaṇḍa Vihāra monastery "established" in the Stūpa, the object so established being left unspecified in the epigraph. But there seems little doubt that the inscription referred to the statue with which it has remained associated under the earth for so long a time. The name of the reigning king is not given, but referring the year to the Śaka era of 78 A. D. the inscription would belong to 170 A. D. which coincides with the reign of the Kushāṇa Emperor Vāsudeva. Although stylistically the Sārnāth and the Maholi statues form part of one independent group they are separated from each other by a period of 89 years. The date of the Śrāvastī statue is unfortunately lost, and it is not possible to say by how much time it was separated from the other two images. In the Museum at Mathurā there are three other Bodhisattva statues, A. 40, A. 41, and A. 63, which are similar in style to the Maholi Bodhisattva and must be assigned to the same group. The image No. A. 63 (ht. 6′-4″) from Lākhnau, district Aligarh, is dated in the year 35 of Huvishka. It is thus evident that the style of making colossal freestanding Bodhisattva images inaugurated by the Sārnāth Bodhisattva in the year 3 of Kanishka continued throughout the Kushāṇa period down to the reign of the last king Vāsudeva. This type of the indigenous Buddha image is akin to the colossal Yaksha statue from Parkham, in which no affinities with the Gandhāra Buddhas and Bodhisattvas can be traced. It is both in its plastic language and conception completely a product of the Mathurā school.

The inscriptions on the Sārnāth and Śrāvastī statues make reference to the post and umbrella ('*daṇḍa*' and '*chhatra*') set up with the main statues. No such details are available in the short Maholi epigraph, but the Bodhisattva was certainly crowned by a large parasol which was square and not circular like the one at Sārnāth. A fragment of this parasol carved with the same symbols as at Sārnāth (four of which namely the lotus garland, fruit vase, svastika and *pūrṇaghaṭa* have survived) has been discovered. (Fig 80)

A search for the pedestal of the Bodhisattva statue led to another still more important discovery at a distance of about 6 feet from the original site of the Bodhisattva.

A New Bacchanalian Group

Figs. 78-79. This is a sculpture carved on both sides, measuring 3′-4″×2′-6″×1′-2″. It supported a bowl, now partially damaged, resting on the topof the trunk of a tree carved in the background. On the obverse side there are four figures, the middle one showing a graceful female in half-kneeling posture. She is evidently intoxicated, and her left hand finds rest on the shoulders of a girlish figure holding a drinking cup, and the right one is held by a standing male figure, obviously her husband, who supports her. The fourth figure on the left side carved in the background and shown in the attitude of '*vismaya*' represents a female

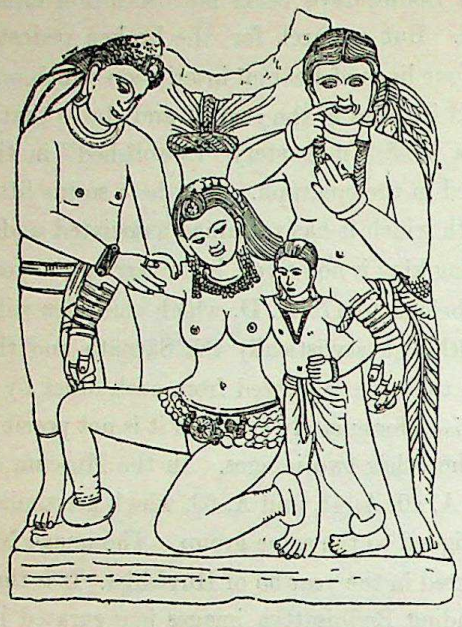


Fig. 78. Bacchanalian Group from Mathura

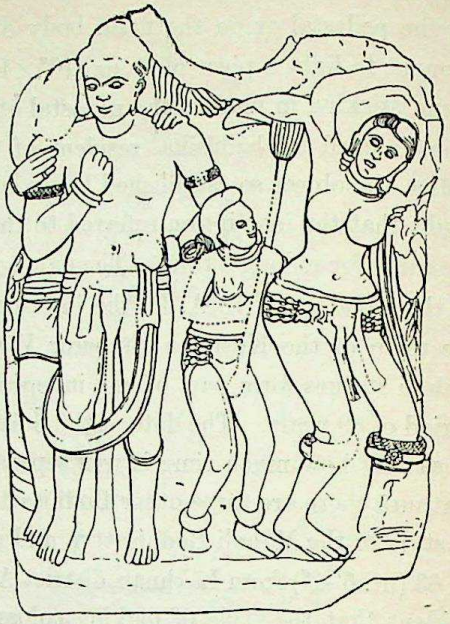


Fig. 79. Bacchanalian Group from Mathura

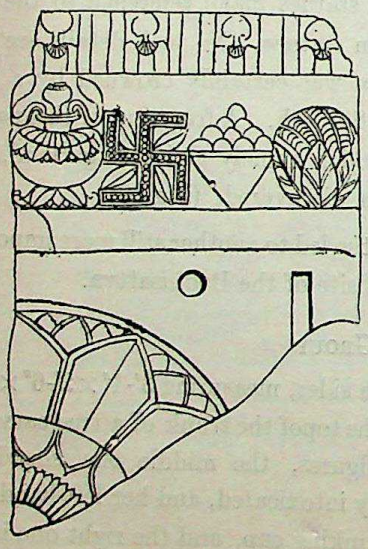


Fig. 80. Fragment of Chhatra

Fig. 81. New Inscribed Image of Kaśyapa Buddha

attendant. She is apparently a hermaphrodite as seen from her undeveloped breasts, masculine shoulders, and hips. Such attendants under the appellations of '*shandha*' and '*varshadhara*' were employed in royal harems (Fig. 78).

On the reverse side there is a scene involving four figures in a joyous dance (Fig. 79).

The whole group bears the class name "Bacchanalian" (*madhupāna*)' and is a valuable addition to the already known specimens of this type from Mathura, namely Stacy's Silenus group found in 1836 from Mathurā and now in the Calcutta Museum, and the well known Palikhera group, in the Mathurā Museum No. C. 2. The present sculpture is in excellent preservation and reveals an unknown standard of achievement of the Mathurā artists during the Kushāṇa period. In the Maholi group the dress and the features of the male and female figures that make up the group on the two sides are purely Indian and do not betray a clumsy mixture of Greek and Indian elements as in the other Mathurā groups previously found. The interest of this find is enhanced by the fact that a somewhat mutilated specimen carved on both sides and similar to this group was found from Naroli village, about half a mile southeast of Maholi in 1922-23, and is now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.[1]

It may also be stated that an exact copy of the reverse side of the Maholi Bacchanalian group is reproduced in the upper panel of a jamb fragment (No. 371, Mathurā Museum) which was rescued from the well of the famous Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā in 1914, which place also lies within a radius of two miles from Maholi. The three villages Maholi, Palikhera and Naroli situated within less than a mile of each other, have each produced a remarkable Bacchanalian group of its own.

The Maholi Bacchanalian group unearthed at a distance of about 6 feet from the Bodhisattva statue and from about the same level must have stood inside the temple of the Khaṇḍa Vihāra monastery. Since the circumstances of its find are known with such absolute certainty it may not be unwarranted to interpret the intended purpose of setting up a Bacchanalian group inside a Buddhist shrine in the heart of a Buddhist monastery. The Bacchanalian group stands for the sensuous and material side of life symbolising the pleasures that overflow the bowl of life which these groups invariably depict. The Buddha on the other hand represents the ascetic ideals of internal peace attained by self mastery and his defeat of Māra, the genius of worldly temptations. After the Buddha's victory and final enlightenment Māra pays homage at the feet of the great teacher, which according to the beautiful synthetic ideals of the Mahāyāna Buddhism represented a lasting compromise between the life of the world and the life of restraint preached by the Buddha, both of which were consequently enshrined under a common roof inside the same religious edifice. It was this ideal which inspired the works of the Kushāṇa artists and which found its most suitable expression in the line of the poet :

प्राप्तो गृहस्थैरपि मोक्षमार्गः।

1. *Archaeol. Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1922-23, p. 161, pl. *XXXVIII* (b).

18. A NEW INSCRIBED IMAGE OF KĀŚYAPA BUDDHA FROM MATHURA

In the month of May, 1937, the Mathura Municipal Board performed digging operations in the main street of the city from Kanskhar to Chhatta Bazar for laying their sewage line. At a depth of about eight feet below the surface, were discovered about fifteen fragmentary antiquities, mostly of the Kushāṇa period. The following pieces may be noted :—

(1) An image of Kāśyapa Buddha carved in the round, showing a male figure standing on a pedestal and preserved remarkably well from the *meḍhramūla* to the feet. He wears a dhoti, a *mekhalā* and a scarf. On the pedestal is an inscription presently to be described. (Fig. 79).

(2) An inscribed pedestal of a Bodhisattva image broken vertically into two pieces.

(3) Fragment of a frieze carved with three Buddha figures seated in *padmāsana*, each placed between two attendants. Traces of two more attendants on either end of the broken frieze. It may be persumed that it depicted the panel of the seven Buddhas, and may be compared with the two friezes numbering 1·7 and 1·37 in the Mathura Museum. (Vogel's *Catalogue*, p. 135 and 139).

(4) End of a *toraṇa* architrave carved on one face with a yawning crocodile having a curled up fish-tail (*jhasha makara*) and by its side another panel containing a human being with a forked tail ending in a dragon's head.

(5) Fragment showing a *Bodhighara* with a few branches and leaves of the Bodhi tree coming out of an ogee arch and others from behind the temple facade. The foliage of the pīpal is exquisitely carved.

(6) A slab with foot-prints showing such auspicious marks as the lotus, *aṅkuśa*, *dhvaja*, etc.

(7) Railing pillar showing a female figure, preserved below the *nābhi-sūtra*, standing on a postrate dwarf.

(8) Several cross-bars and a fragment of a Buddha image.

The first antiquity is of great importance for the purpose of Buddhist iconography. For the first time it introduces us to an actual image of one of the previous Buddhas, *viz.*, Kāśyapa Buddha in Mathura art. The inscription is boldly carved in Brāhmī script of the Kushāṇa period in one and a half line on the front face of the pedestal, which I propose to read as follows :—

l. 1—[रु] वकस दानं देव पुत्रो माघो [:] बुधस कशपस

l. 2—पद्र महस्थकेन

i.e., Gift of an image of the Buddha Kāśyapa by Ruvaka, Chief of the village, of the Devaputra Māgha.

The order of words in the sentence is somewhat faulty. Ruvaka is connected with *dānam* and must be the name of the donor. The phrase *Devaputro Māgho* is not intelligible except as proper name to be connected with *padra-mahasthakena*, but I confess inability to identify this *Devaputra Māgho*. I wonder if the reading could be amended as *deva pratimāyāh* but for this I see little warrant. The words *Buddhasa Kasapasa* constitute the soul of the record and happily do not present any difficulty. The last word *padra-mahasthakena* is in the instrumental case and must refer to the donor who it appears was an officer placed in charge of a village. The word *padra*, according to Dr. Sten Konow, occurs in the Shakardarra Well Inscription and consequently in its copy, *viz.*, the Rawal Kharashthi Inscription from Mathura. [Sten Konow, *Corpus of Kharoshṭhī Inscriptions*, p. 160]. It is also found in the inscriptions of the Gupta period in such terms as *Śivaka-padrake* (cf. Fleet, *Cropus* III, Ins38, line 22, p. 170, note 3). Its dictionary meaning is 'village' and that suits the sense in the present context. *Mahasthaka* seems to be a title and is met with for the first time. Curiously enough, in line 20 of the very inscription quoted above from Fleet, the word *mahattara* has been used. Fleet takes it as a class of officers, and accepts Monier Williams' meaning of it as 'the head or oldest man of a village.' (Ibid., p. 169, Note 7). I think the title *mahasthaka* is an earlier form of *mahattara*, and *padra mahasthaka* would therefore be a real village official in the system of Kushāṇa polity, corresponding to the *grāmaṇī* of the still earlier epochs.

According to the *Buddhotpāda* doctrine, the Buddhists believe in a list of seven Buddhas who incarnated in the past in successive *kalpas*. They still think that the eighth to come will be Maitreya, who is at present a Bodhisattva on the way to Buddhahood.

We have also the valuable evidence of Aśoka's Nigali Sāgar Pillar inscription that a *Stūpa*, dedicated to the Buddha Konakmana (which had existed from an earlier epoch), was enlarged by the Emperor to the double of its original size.

The evidence for the Śuṅga period is far more perfect. We get a full list of the Seven Buddhas in the inscriptions at Bharhut together with their symbolic representations. A list of them is given below :—

Pali Name	Sanskrit.	Bodhi tree.	Latin name of the Bodhi tree.
1. विपस्सी	विपश्चित्	पाटलि	Bignonia Suoveolens.
2. सिखि	शिखि	आम्र	Magnifera Indica.
3. वेसभू	विश्वभृत्	शाल	Shorea Robusta.
4. ककुसध	ककुत्सन्ध	शिरीष	Acacia Sirisa.
5. कोनागमन	कोणागमन or कनकमुनि	उदुम्बर	Ficus Glomerata.
6. कस्सप	काश्यप	न्यग्रोध	Ficus Indica.
7. साकमुनि	शाक्यमुनि	अश्वत्थ	Ficus Religiosa.

(Cf. Barua, *Barhut*, Book II, pp. 1—7).

The belief in the Seven Buddhas seems to have been later on supplemented by a hierarchy of numerous Bodhisattvas. During the Kushāṇa period we find in Mathurā art, on the one hand friezes depicting the past, present and future Buddhas in one single sculpture, and on the other several Bodhisattvas treated independently. Of the former class frieze No. 1·7 in Vogel's *Catalogue* is a typical specimen. He says, 'The figure to the proper left wearing royal dress must be the future Buddha or Bodhisattva Maitreya. In his left hand we recognise the vessel, which is his emblem in the Greeco-Buddhist sculptures of Gandhāra. The other five figures wear monk's dress ; that next to Maitreya seated in meditation must be Śākyamuni, the Buddha of the present age, and the other three his immediate predecessors, Krakuchchhanda, Kanakamuni and Kāśyapa. Probably three Buddha figures are lost to the proper right.' (Vogel, *Catalogue of the Mathura Museum*, p. 135 ; also 1.37, p. 139). The present image of Kāśyapa Buddha rightly belongs to the class of representations of the previous Buddhas in Kushāṇa art. We have already found from Mathurā the image of Dīpaṅkara Buddha who was the first of the twenty-four Buddhas. This statue was dedicated by the Buddhist nun Dhavasrī in the Kushāṇa period, and is now deposited in the Lucknow Museum, B. 23.

Of the new Bodhisattvas carved in the form of independent images we have several examples of the Bodhisattva Maitreya who is always distinguished by an *amṛita-ghaṭa* held in his left hand. (Vogel's *Catalogue*, A. 63, p. 64). Gautama Buddha, too, is called a Bodhisattva in his earliest images and is seated under a Bodhi tree, similar to the tree found at Bharhut. Mathura has also produced about a dozen specimens of Kushāṇa period Bodhisattvas of the type bearing the Dhyānī Buddhas in their crown, but this phase of the Buddha-Bodhisattva iconography reflects the beginnings of the more complex Bodhisattva cult of which we find a fuller development in the arts of Sarnath and Nalanda.

It is thus evident that at a time when, owing to the portrayal of the Buddha in his human form, the worship of the Buddha's image was extremely popular, there was a tendency to worship the previous Buddhas on the one hand, and to develop a pantheon of many new Bodhisattvas on the other.

19. MATHURA RAILING PILLARS

The great school of Mathura sculpture representing one of the most illustrious periods of India's artistic achievement is distinguished by its production of a large number of railing pillars carved in high relief on the obverse and generally in low relief on the reverse. In ancient times these pillars formed part of stone enclosures erected round Buddhist and Jaina monuments. Each pillar had three mortices on the two sides in which cross-bars were fitted to join with other similar pillars. They were held in position by a basement below and they supported a coping stone at the top. The entire structure of the railing was pierced in the centre by four elaborate gateways each of which stood facing in one cardinal direction. The earliest specimens of monumental railings and gateways have been discovered at Sanchi, Bharhut and Bodh Gaya. At Mathura with the advent of the Kushāṇa period independent figure sculpture achieved important development, but still the railing continued for another two centuries as the principal medium of expression for the work of the artists.

Besides their superb excellence for aesthetic beauty the railing pillars stand out as interesting documents for the study of human life in its social and cultural spheres as lived in those days. Here one can see preserved in stone sketches of contemporary life showing men and women engaged in their favourite sports and pastimes, dance and music which reveal their joyous outlook on life and testify to their faith in a creed of freedom and sun-shine. It is also pleasing to notice on these pillars some of the familiar scenes with which our classical poets have acquainted us in a variety of most beautiful descriptions.

The following scenes may be recognised to be of unusual interest, and their portrayal in places where religious things as a matter of course should have predominated, points to the great hold which themes of this nature enjoyed on the lives of the people. In fact, it may be said to the credit of India's creative genius that her great thinkers took a balanced view of life and evolved a frame-work in which the material and positive sides of life were harmonised with its spiritual and religious ideals. India has, therefore, boldly stood for assigning an honourable place to paintings and sculptures as well as to dance and music in her gigantic experiments of religion as unfolded in her long creative traditions through the ages. Religion is viewed not as a negation of life, but as a potent factor which by its magic touch ennobles all that which life stands for. This synthesis demonstrates itself in the extraordinary interest which religious art shows for the contents of womanly life, marked by a genuine attempt to probe deeper into her mystry and to present her as the mother and sustainer of creation. It is apparent from the study of the scenes on Mathura railing pillars that the artists do not approach their delicate subject in a light-hearted manner ; they evince a respect and restraint which does not permit works of art to be degraded into scenes of mere sensuous narration.

A

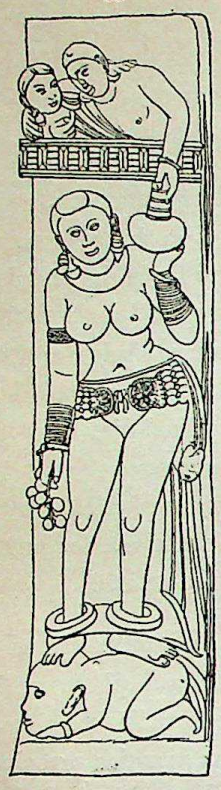


Fig. 82

B

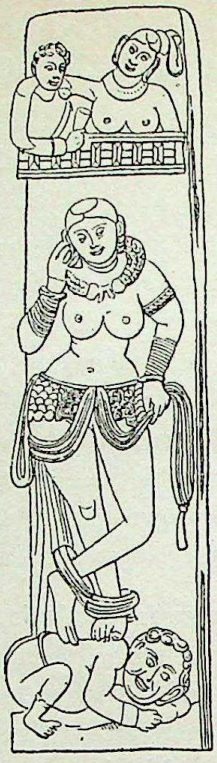


Fig. 83

C

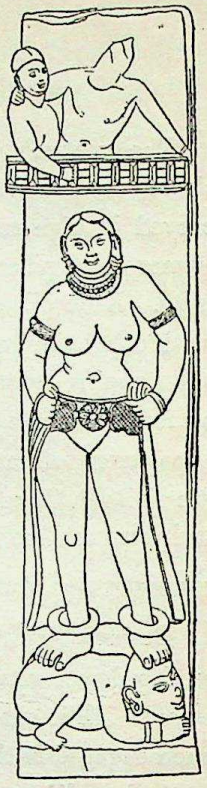


Fig. 84

D

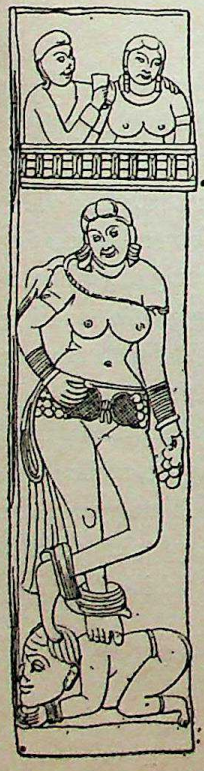


Fig. 85

E

Fig. 86

Fig. 87

The scenes which are interpreted here are carved on pillars which although originating from Mathura, have got distributed over three different museums, *viz.*, those at Lucknow and Calcutta besides the local museum at Mathura. This awkward arrangement is a serious handicap to the pillars being viewed as a unit for realising the full effect of their artistic perfection, and also hinders a comparative study on the basis of the entire material easily accessible in one place. We now proceed to describe the more important of the pillars :—

1. *Aśoka-dohada,*—Pregnancy or desire of the Aśoka tree. This scene is carved on railling pillar J. 55 in the Mathura museum, sculptured with a graceful female figure wearing a bead girdle and standing under an Aśoka tree of which she clasps a branch with her left hand, and leans with her back against its trunk. With her left foot she touches the Aśoka, thus illustrating the poetic description expressed in the *Meghadūta* as Vāma-pādābhilāshī Aśokaḥ. The most eloquent description of this theme is found in the drama of Kālidāsa treating of the love of Mālavikā and Agnimitra. Acccording to an old śloka quoted by the commentator Mallināṭha, it is said that the Aśoka tree longed to kiss the left foot of a beautiful maiden before its time of efflorescence. Although literary tradition is uniform in the matter that only the left foot was employed for this purpose, there is another railing pillar in the Mathura museum, No. 2345, in which the woman touches the tree with her right foot. Surely the poetic fancy behind this scene seems to have had strong hold in the cultural life of Kushāṇa and Gupta periods. Recently Dr. J. Hackin has discovered from the site of Begram (ancient Kapiśā), about 40 miles north of Kabul, a carved ivory plaque illustrating the scene of Aśoka-dohada, in which the figure of the maiden with her peculiar spiral chignon is greatly similar to the figure on the Mathura railing pillar.

2. *Sadyaḥ-snātā,*—Woman after bath. This scene carved on pillar No. 1509 in the Mathura museum depicts a woman wearing a short petti-coat and wringing out water from her wet locks after bath (*keśa-nistoya-kāriṇī*) ; a swan is shown receiving the drops in its beak. This idea has found favourite repetition in classical Hindi poetry and continued as a motif in Indian art right upto the 19th century. It was fancied that Kṛishṇa himself incarnated as a *haṁsa* to drink the drops of water from Rādhā's hair.

3. *Nirjhara-snāna,*—Bath under a water-fall. This scene is carved on two pillars now preserved in the Lucknow museum. Of these J. 278 shows a female figure in three-quarters profile standing to right under a projecting precipice and receiving on her back a stream of water coming down in swift torrents.

4. *Aśoka-pushpa-prachāyikā,*—Gathering of Aśoka flowers. This scene is represented on pillar No. J. 55 and 2345 in the Mathura museum and B. 80 in the Lucknow museum. The woman stands on Aśoka tree in full blossom and is gathering flowers with her right hand raised up in a basket held in left hand. She stands in a very graceful manner with her back towards the visitor and head and face shown in profile. The gathering of flowers was one of the most popular sports with women in ancient India. In such scenes the Aśoka tree plays a pro-

minent part, although *kadamba*, mango and other garden trees also must have formed part of floral amusements. *Pushpa-prachāyikā* and also *Pushpa-bhañjikā* were the special names for such diversions which we find recorded even in the grammatical literature. For example, on Pāṇini's sūtra, *Prāchāṁ krīdāyām*, we find such illustrations as *Aśhoka-pushpa-prachāyikā*, *Uddālaka-pushpa-bhañjikā*, etc. The lovely poetic expression *Śāla-bhañjikā* which we find both in Aśvaghosha and in Bāṇa's *Kādambarī*, must have been derived originally from such sports in which the peculiarly graceful motif of a beautiful woman standing with *tribhaṅgī* curves of the body under a tree and clasping one of its branches, soon came to be recognised as the most delightful thing for the eye both in art and life.

5. *Madanotsava*,—Dance of Love. On pillar No. B. 92 in the Lucknow museum we see a female figure dancing in one of her happy love ecstasies. A parrot who is the vehcil of the god of love, Kāmadeva, has conveyed to her the message of love, thus initiating the youthful maiden into the consciousness of a new world. Like the princess in the fable she wakes up after a long spell of maidenly innocence, and the intense activity of her heart bursts forth into rhythmic dance. The bird is perched on her girdle and is shown to be nibbling at the central binding knot. The whole idea is most delicately and beautifully executed.

6. *Śuka-krīḍā*,—Diversion with a parrot. This is a very common scene represented on Mathura railing pillar. Generally the parrot rests on the left hand or shoulder of the woman who tempts it with a fruit held in right hand. On a well known specimen now in the Indian Museum the woman is actually holding a cage in right hand while the parrot sits on the left arm as if whispering into her ear (Dr. Vogel, *La Sculpture de Mathurā*, Pl. XIXA).

7. *Khaḍgābhinaya*,—Dance of the sword. On railing pillar No. 152 in the Mathura museum found from Bhūteshwar we find a female figure standing in a dance posture holding a sword in her left hand. The obvious meaning of such a motif is the demonstration of sword-dance. On a pillar in the Lucknow museum No. J.275, the same scene is repeated, the woman being shown standing under a *kadamba* tree.

8. *Nartakī*,—Court Danseuse. Pillar B. 75 in the Lucknow museum illustrates a very typical dance pose common in court dances which have survived to this day, and in which the dancer with great rapidity of movement doubles her legs at the knees and rests her body on the ground.

9. *Gopa-yoshit*,—A female Gopī. On railing pillar B. 86 in the Lucknow museum we have the representation of a woman wearing a rustic petti-coat (*lehngā*) and a scarf (*oṛhnī*) falling back from the head, and carrying a big pitcher on her head. Her features and the well-built limbs make her out to be a village woman lacking in the finer graces of city life. She should be identified as a *gopī* or a typical country-woman in the land of Braja, where powerful living traditions about her have survived both in religion and in literature in relation to the legend of the divine cow-herd Krishṇa. The conception of *gapīs* certainly goes back to the Ku-

shāṇa period. The *Buddhacharita* of Aśvaghosha refers to gopa-women and their dalliances (IV. 14). In the famous Tamil classic *Śilappadhikaram* (Epic of the Anklet) which is one of the five great Mahākāvyas of Tamil literature and is definitely assigned to the 2nd century A.D., there is distinct reference to a cow-herd Kṛishṇa and his dance with the *gopīs*. [English translation by V. R. R. Dikshitar, Canto XVII, p. 228.]

10. *Prasādhikā*,—Toilet-attendant. The scenes of *prasādhana* are common enough on Mathura railing pillars. We find separate pillars devoted to the *Nāyikā* or the Queen herself looking in a mirror doing her coiffure or applying toilet paste, and also to her attendants carrying the *śṛiṅgārapeṭikā* (toilet-basket) in one hand and a jug of water in the other. The specimen in the Bharat Kala Bhavan is in perfect state of perservation. (Vogel, *La Sculpture de Mathurā*, Pl. L. also Plate XVIII E).

11. *Kanduka-krīḍā*,—Playing with the ball. This scene is represented on railing pillar No. I. 61 in the Mathura museum. Kālidāsa has referred to Pārvatī's *kanduka-krīḍā* in the *Kumārasambhava* (I. 29) and it appears that playig with balls was favourite sports of girls in ancient India.

12. *Vaṁsī-vīṇā-vādinī*,—Woman playing the flute and the harp. The flute has special association in the history of music at Mathura, and it is therefore gratifying to find several fragments of railing pillars on which woman playing the flute are shown. The harp or the *sapta-tantrī vīṇā* is common not only at Mathura but at almost all other centres of ancient Indian art, and its representation at Mathura also is fairly common both in stone and clay.

The number of railing pillars is pretty large, and other miscellaneous scenes may also be gathered. For example, we have the representation of a mother amusing her child with a rattle (I. 16), or women adorning themselves with heavy garlands or with a conspicuous necklace and still others characterised by a sensuous appeal displaying erotic charms of various descriptions.

20. A RELIEF OF ṚISHYA ŚṚIṄGA

On railing pillar No. J. 7 in the Mathura Museum is carved the figure of a boy (Pl. XI) which Dr. J. Ph. Vogel has described in his *Catalogue* of the Mathura Museum :—"a male figure of Faun-like appearance with elaborate turban, necklace of beads and other ornaments. He is standing under a mango tree in blossom with his right hand raised to his lips, and with his left placed against his thigh. He wears a sash round his waist and a curious necklace round his shoulders. Over the tree is a balcony without figures." Writing later about the same image in his book '*La Sculpture de Mathurā*' Dr. Vogel identifies this figure as that of a young man, probably a Yaksha, of a fashionable type. He also suggests that its pose resembles that of Harpokrates found at Taxila by Sir John Marshall (p. 102, Pl. XXI, fig. (*b*) ; see *Archaeological Survey Report*, 1912-13, Pl. XX, figs. f, g, h, for the statuette of Harpokrates).

The figure cannot be that of Harpokrates. The difference in the attitudes of the right hand of the Mathura figure and of the Taxila statuette is striking. In the Harpokrates' figure the index-figure of the right hand touches the lower lip which is indicative of silence. If we were to trace a parallel to this pose of Harpokrates' figure in Sanskrit literature it could be found in the figure of Nandī, who in Kālidāsā's *Kumārasambhava* (III, 41) guards the entrance of Śiva's place of meditation. "Nandī posted at the entrance of the bower, having a golden staff resting against his forearm, bade the Gaṇas to observe stillness with a gesture in which a finger of his right hand touched his mouth". Only one finger was needed to indicate the gesture of 'silence'.

Two fingers of the right hand however of the figure on the Mathura railing-pillar, the index and the middle one, are placed on the lower part of the chin and do not touch the lower lip as the finger of the Taxila statuette does. This Mudrā is indicative of astonishment (*vismaya*) and reflection (*vitarka*). The eye-balls are turned upwards and the whole expression is one of deliberation in which an awareness of the immediate surroundings is absent. Satisfaction beams on the face. (Fig. 88).

The decisive symbol however in the iconography of this figure is the dwarfish horn ($2\frac{3}{4}$") projecting against a leafy background above the forehead from under the turban. This feature suggests the identification of the figure with Ṛishya Śṛiṅga. The story of this sage occurs at length in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Bālakāṇḍa, Sarga 10, and *Mahābhārata*, Vana Parva, Adhyayā 110-113. The legend is also related with a lyrical charm by the poet Kshemendra in the sixty-fifth Pallava of his *Bodhisattvāvadāna-Kalpalatā*.[1] All the versions agree that the Muni-kumāra was born of a hind (*mṛigyāmutpannaḥ*) and won the name of Ṛishya Śṛiṅga. Kshemendra calls him Eka-Śṛiṅga from a single horn growing on his brow.

[1] *Bodhisattvāvadāna*, LXVI, 18 ; cf. also *Mahābhārata*, ch. 110. V. 39.

He was the son of saint Kāśyapa and having lived in a solitary forest, knew nothing of women. He was tempted by maidens sent for this purpose by king Lomapāda. The maidens after stirring his amorous emotions went away, but the mind of their fresh victim turned constantly to them. He neglected his duties of a religious student, and when his father questioned him as to what had happened, he related innocently his meeting with another 'Brahmachārin' who had bewitched his mind. Next day when Kāśyapa was not in the hermitage, the maidens returned and enticed away Ṛishya Śṛiṅga on a floating hermitage to the kingdom of Lomapāda. On his arrival the king bestowed his daughter on him in marriage.

The most suggestive moment in the story is that in which the young Brahmachārin has for the first time beheld a maiden. "And through him then her eyes did flash a current of celestial fire ; the poor boy did not understand the rushing feeling of desire." (*Journal of the Buddhist Text Society of India*, Vol. I. Pt. II, p. 5, V. 26.)

It is this state which the sculptor has shown on the railing pillar. The upturned (*ūrdhvadṛishṭi ;* Vanaparva III 21) and rolling (*vighūrṇamāna ;* Ksh. V. 63) eyes are clearly discernible. The version of the *Mahābhārata* also refers to beautiful and fragrant garlands twined with silken threads which the maidens gave him. The Mathura figure actually wears a conspicuous garland thrown over both shoulders. The young sage is also shown adorned with a necklace of big pearls and several wristles. There are two pendants in the ears. Thus he has been bedecked by his female paramours.

The figure which was described as one of Faun-like appearance can be no other than that of Ṛishya Śṛiṅga whose story was a favourite subject with both the Brāhmanical and Buddhist writers. Hiuen Tsang says that the place of the sage Ekaśṛiṅga was situated somewhere near Peshawar in the Gandhāra territory. "Going North-West from the stone-cell above 100 *li* or so (from Poluśa, the modern town of Pali near Peshawar), we cross a small hill and come to a large mountain. To the south of the mountain is a Saṅghārāma, with a few priests as occupants, who study the Great Vehicle. By the side of it is a Stūpa, built by Aśoka Rāja. This is the place which in olden time was occupied by Ekaśṛiṅga Ṛishi. Deceived by a pleasure woman he lost his spiritual faculties. The woman, mounting his shoulders, returned to the city".[1] The Buddhist version of this legend is that Buddha was once born as Ṛishya Śṛiṅga and the maiden who allured him was Yaśodharā.

[1] "This account of Hiuen Tsang about Ekaśṛiṅga is evidently based on the episode of Ṛishya Śṛiṅga in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. According to Kshemendra, the maiden who enticed away Ekaśṛiṅga was a princess of pure morals . The story of Ekaśṛiṅga is constantly referred to in Buddhist books. See Eitels' Handbook, *Catena of Buddhist Scripture*, p. 260, *Romantic Legend*, p. 124 ; Yule's *Marcopolo*, vol. II, p. 233. *Ind. Ant.* Vol. I, p. 244 ; Vol. II, pp. 140f."
Journal and Text of the Buddhist Text Society of India, *i. c.* p. 14.

21. NATIVITY SCULPTURE AT LUMBINĪ

It is worthwhile reproducing what Babu Puran Chandra Mookerji who made a survey of the ancient sites in the Tarai wrote about this group-statue of Māyādevī.

"I may bring to prominent notice the sculptured group of Māyādevī. Its size is about $5\frac{1}{3}'$ by $3\frac{1}{4}'$ in height and breadth. Though it is completely defaced, yet, from what remains, it appears to be once an excellent example of the ancient art, being of the style of workmanship which is generally associated with the time of Ashoka the Great. This group-statue is of the yellowish kind of stone, which was employed in the edict pillars and in the two famous Yaksha door-keepers (*Dvārapālas*) of Pāṭaliputra, now in Calcutta Museum . The composition of the group is no less spirited than artistic. The group consists of four female figures, of whom that on the right is Māyādevī. She stands in a graceful attitude, holding the branch of a Śāla tree with her right hand, while with her left she adjusts her lower garments. The head and body are defaced, but the background above shows delicate gradation of relief in exhibiting the branch and the leaves of the tree, contours of the head and hands show the skill of a masterhand, and her hair falling on wavelets on her left shoulder maintains the balance with the right hand raised up to hold the branch. Dignified action is exhibited in her whole attitue.

On the right of Māyādevī, and immediately below her right hand, stands, close by a female attendant of younger age and smaller stature, with her right hand raised to help her. Her pose bespeaks considerate action, while the third figure, probably Prajāpati Gautamī, the younger sister of Māyādevī, energetically comes in bringing water, presumably from the tank of the Śākyas, and bends her person to give it to her, thus reminding us of the suddenness of the delivery. But the fourth figure stands as a spectator talking and meaning business in her own way of aiding the queen. The queen, however, is already free from the pains of delivery ; an infant Boddhisattva descending on the earth from her right side, and having taken the first seven steps indicative of the seven-fold initiation before the attainment of Buddhahood, stands triumphant knowing full well that this was his last birth, and that henceforth he was free from the miseries of further re-incarnation. It would be well if the missing fragments that have peeled off are recovered from the ruins and reflexed in their proper places to convey the full meaning of this most interesting and, I should say, historical group-statue, which was probably executed under the orders of Aśoka in the second century, after the death of Buddha."*

The nativity group is reproduced by P.C. Mookerji on plate XXIVa of his book by wood-cut block. Mr. Dube's photograph is so far as I know the first photographic illustration

* P.C. Mookerji, A Report on a tour of Exploration of the Antiquities in the Tarāi, Nepal, the region of Kapilavastu, during February and March, 1899, Calcutta, Superintendent, Government Printing 1901. (Pp. 37 & 38).

of this important sculpture, although one wishes that this photo were more distinict. I have not seen the original myself, but on stylistic grounds I do not think it can be assigned to the reign of Aśoka. The oblique fold of the *Dhotī* running from the knee of the proper right leg to the thigh of the left leg of Māyādevī is a typical Kushāṇa feature. The wavy flowing locks of Mahā-Prajāpati Gautamī also connot be a Mauryan feature. Although the details of the Indra's head are defaced, there is a suggestion of the projecting high crown on his head as seen in Kushāṇa representations of this deity. The fourth figure on left is not a female but male attendant wearing a foliated *mukuṭa* typical of the male figures in Kushāṇa art. In Mookerji's wood-cut illustrations he is bearing a cloth band round the chest (*Vaksha-Bandhana*) which is seen on other Kushāṇa sculptures also. On grounds of style, therefore, I think it is warranted to assign it to the early Kushāṇa period, or more precisely the reign of Kanishka.

Babu P. C. Mookerji's remark about the stone calls for attention. I take that stone is not that of the Aśokan pillars—which is pinkish Chunār sandstone, but the same as that of the famous statue of Kanishka, a yellowish rather buff-coloured stone which is used in the case of a limited number of Mathura sculpture beginning from the statue of ParkhamYaksha to the Kanishka portrait and other images of the reign of Kanishka. It seems to me that the famous Buddhist places of pilgrimage were surveyed, identified and marked more definitely in the reign of Kanishka and statues of Mathura origin were sent to sacred spots at Sārnāth, Kasia, and Śrāvastī and Lumbinī where the present Nativity group has been found. The sculpture however, requires to be published from better photographs and to be examined more closely. Other fragmentary sculptures hoarded up at the site should also be examined for ascertaining their stylistic affinites with Mathura art.

22. PALACE-SCENES ON A MATHURA PILLAR

A red sand-stone pillar in the Lucknow Museum (No. J. 533 ; ht. 4′ 8½″×10″×11″) unearthed in 1890 by Dr. Führer in the ruins of the Kankali Tila, Mathura, is worthy of special attention. It was published by Smith on Pl. XXVII of the *Jaina Stupa of Mathura* and also in the Journal of Indian Art and Industry for October 1893 (Pl. 86 of No. 44 of Vol. V), but without any explanation of the scenes depicted. From the cultural point of view the sculpture is a worthy document of the rich and picturesque life of the Kushāṇa period illustrating scenes of dance, music, sports, drinking and toilet past-times. Although the spiritual faith of the people was grounded in the teachings of the Buddha, Mahāvīra or Bhāgavata Vaishṇavism during the early centuries of the Christian era at Mathura, yet behind the religious facade we meet with a free and frank enjoyment of life in all its aspects.

The pillar is carved on the back and front sides, each containing four superimposed panels. [Figs.89-96]. The eight scenes taken together represent the palace amusements(प्रासाद-विहार)of a young loving couple—in this case Nanda and his beautiful wife Sundarī, a suitable subject for poetic description and sculptural illustration. Aśvaghosha who lived in the reign of Kanishka (1st-2nd century A.D.) was deeply touched by the story of Nanda and his peerless wife and has immortalized the charm and pathos of their life in his poem, the *Saundarananda.* Nanda shut up in his palace and absorbed in love enjoyed and lived with his mistress like a *chakravāka* bird with its mate—

प्रासादसंस्थो मदनैककार्यः प्रियासहायो विजहार नन्दः ॥४॥ १
स चक्रवाक्येव हि चक्रवाकस्तया समेतः प्रियया प्रियार्हः ॥४॥ २

From the art point of view the pillar is a remarkable specimen of the Kushāṇa school of Mathura sculpture. The scenes are treated in a very simple and natural style and are full of vivid expression. The happy balance between the direct rendering of the subject-matter and the simplicity of execution as evident in this pillar was the hall-mark of the early Kushāṇa style.

Description of the Scenes.

Front side.

Scene 1.—Propitiation of the proud lady (मानापनोदनः—Fig. 89). Aśvaghosha distinctly refers to Sundarī as a type of *Māninī nāyikā :*

लक्ष्म्या च रूपेण च सुन्दरीति स्तम्भेन गर्वेण च मानिनीति।
दीप्त्या च मानेन च भामिनीति यातो बभावे त्रिविधेन नाम्ना ॥

'Three were the names by which she was known—Sundarī on account of her majesty and beauty ; Māninī for her obstinacy and pride ; and Bhāminī for her radiant loveliness and high spirits.' (*Saundarananda,* IV. 3).

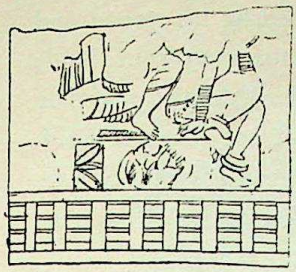


Fig. 89 Propitiation of the proud lady

Fig. 88 Ṛishiśriṅga

Fig. 93 Music

Fig. 90 Sundrī at toilet

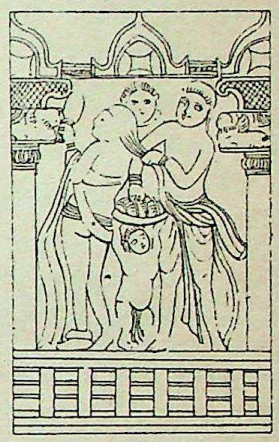


Fig. 94 Dressing her hair

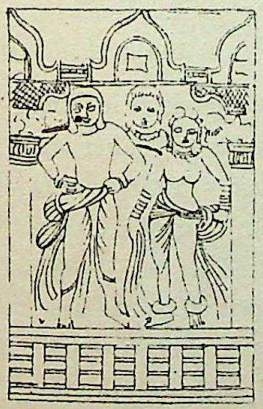


Fig. 91 Dance

Fig. 92 Drinking Scene

Fig. 95 A Place-amusement Scene

Fig. 96 Dance

The scene in this panel illustrates Nanda reconciling or propitiating his proud and spirited wife. Both are seated on a long bench. Sundarī's head is turned away from Nanda and her back is turned towards him. The weight of her body rests on the right hand placed on the bench. The pose of the left hand shows that it was placed against her cheek or head. The left leg is placed on the right one as of interlocking and fixing it. Sundarī is wearing profuse armlets (*valaya*), heavy anklets (*nūpura*), a dhoti and a broad girdle over it. Under the bench is a garland basket (माल्य-चंगेरिका).

Scene 2.—Toileting (मण्डन, Fig. 90). Sundarī seated on a round chair of wicker work (*vetrāsana*) is holding a toilet-morror in her left hand and painting her face with the right. A female attendant is standing at the back and is in the act of arranging her locks. Nanda is standing in front of her holding a lotus garland in right hand. Behind the lady in a corner is a water jar placed on a high fluted stand.

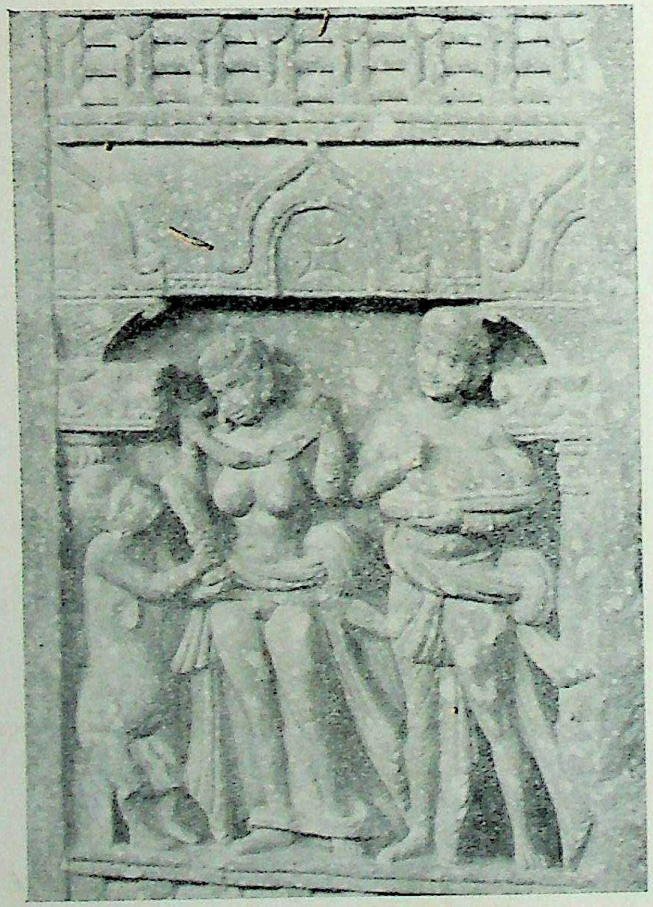
Scene 3.—Dance (नृत्य Fig. 91). Nanda and Sundarī are dancing together. A female attendant is standing in the background.

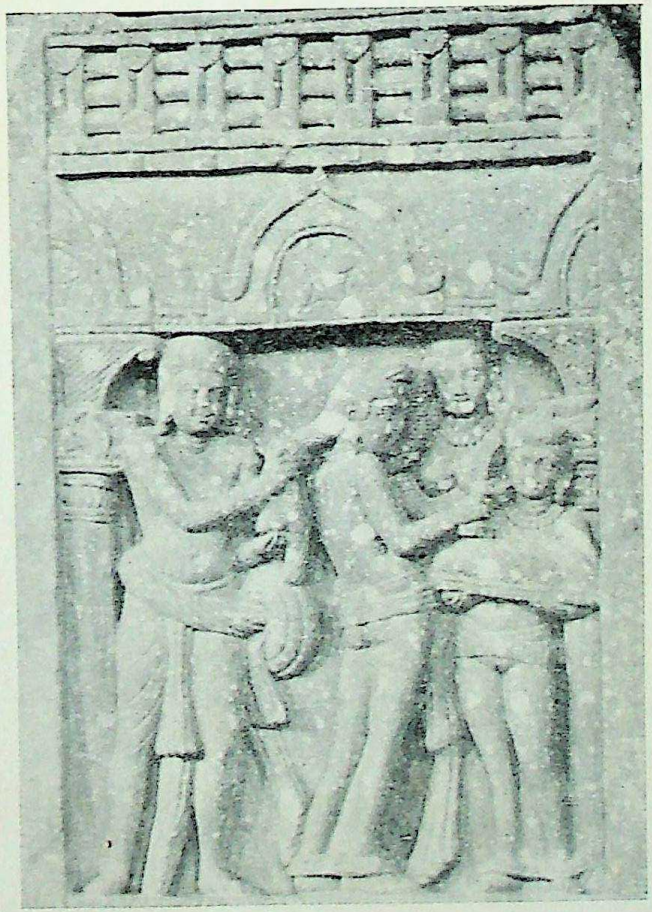
Scene 4.—Drinking (मधुपान, Fig. 92). Nanda and Sundarī seated together on a bench are enjoying intoxicating drinks. 'In the intervals of exhaustion the pair sportively intoxicated each other by way of mutual refreshment.' (बलमान्तरेऽन्योन्यविनोदनेन सलीनमन्योन्यममीमदच्च, *Saundarananda*, IV. 11).

Nanda is holding the goblet between the fingers of his right hand and offering it to the lady. Sundarī is wearing a big garland round her neck and shoulders and grasping it with the left hand. Similar conspicuous garlands occur in other scenes at Mathura and are suggestive of special amorous moods. In the background are two female attendants, one of whom a *surāhārī* is bearing the wine-jar (*surā-bhāṇḍa*) in her left hand.

Scene 5.—Music (संगीत, Fig. 93). Both Nanda and Sundarī are seated on circular wicker stools facing each other. Sundarī is holding a *vīṇā* in her lap and playing on it. Her eyes are intently fixed on the instrument. Two female attendants are standing at the back.

Scene 6.—Coiffure of the lady (वेणीप्रसाधन, Fig. 94). Sundarī is standing in profile looking sideways. She is holding a mirror in right hand and is looking her face in it. With her left hand she seems to be painting her face, most probably the scene of paining tattoo marks (विशेषक रचना) to which reference is found in Aśvaghosha (*Saund.*, IV. 13, 20). Nanda is standing on the right side and is in the act of dressing her hair. He is holding her long braid (*veṇī*) in his left hand, and with the right he is lifting a garland from a basket supported on the head of a dwarf servant. On a railing pillar in the Mathura Museum (186) a similar scene is represented (*A Handbook of Sculptures in the Mathura Museum*, p. 40), and there also it appears to be a scene depicting the love sports of Nanda and Sundarī. Aśvaghosha gives a detailed description of the facial decoration of Sundarī, but with this difference that in the poem





Details of a railing pillar showing palace-life. Mathura. Kushana.

Sundri is said to have transferred the mirror to her husband whereas in the carved scene she is holding it herself. (Cf. *Saund.* IV. 13, 20).

Scene 7.—A palace-amusement scene showing a lady and jester (उत्तरीयावकर्षण Fig. 95). Sundari is seated on a *vetrāsana* with right leg placed on a foot-stool. In front of her stands a jester wearing a quaint skull-cap marked with a front knot or plume. From his shoulder hangs a scarf. The lady is pulling the scarf which the jester is holding against her. A female attendant is standing at the back. All the three figures are looking mirthful.

This was a favourite palace amusement in ancient India, Besides its artistic representation on this pillar and elsewhere literary reference to it also found in the Kādambarī of Bāṇabhaṭṭa. A detailed description of a similar scene on a terracotta panel from Mathura was given by me in an article in the *J.I.S.O.A.*, 1942, pp. 69-73. The inmates of the harem regaled themsleves by practising such light jokes on the palace chamberlains (*kanchukī*), jesters (*vidushaka*) and such other attendants (*cheṭa*, *viṭa*). The cap with a frontal plume and the conspicuous pricked ears projecting at right angles from the head are intended to emphasise the humorous character of the male figure who appears to be a Vidūshaka. The scene on this Kushāṇa pillar presents an earlier version of the scene on the Gupta terracotta panel, both from Mathura.

Scene 8.—Dance (नृत्य, Fig. 95). Nanda and Sundarī are dancing together. A female attendant is standing in the background and a dwarf by his side.

The discovery of a Buddhist pillar from the predominantly Jaina site of Kankali Tila requires some explanation. Unfortunately there is no record left of the excavations conducted by Dr. Führer in 1890-92, at this very important site, nor does it appear that the dig had any well-defined scientific purpose other than that of collecting mere stone antiquities. There is, however a very strong Jaina tradition which records that the Buddhists for some time entered into a dispute with the Jainas for the possession of the Stūpa at the Kankali site, and that after about six months of controversy during which time the Buddhists appear to have remained strong the issue was decided by the king in favour of the Jainas. This tradition is preserved in the Vyavahārasūtra Bhāṣhya (V. 27-28), Bṛihatkathākosha of Harisheṇa (931-32 A.D.), Yaśastilakachampū of Somadeva (959 A.D.) and the Vividhatīrthakalpa of Jinaprabha Sūri (1325-1351 A.D.) of which the Mathurāpurīkalpa gives a detailed account of the legendary history of the Jaina Stūpa. There is no doubt that originally the site was sanctified by the construction of a Jaina Stūpa. Subsequently when the sopt gained in importance the Buddhists who were powerful at Mathura during the first and second century A.D. seem to have appropriated a portion of the site for building a monument sacred to their own religion. This temporary trespass by the Buddhists on an avowedly Jaina site explains in some manner the discovery of some Buddhist sculptures, amongst which the Nandasundari pillar is one, from the site of the Kankali Tila.

23. THE VINE MOTIF IN MATHURA ART

Recently we acquired for the Mathurā Museum a relief carved with a scene of the worship of a Śiva Liṅga (No. 2661. Fig. 97). Two persons wearing Scythian dress, boots, trousers and coat, holding garlands and flowers in their hands are shown as worshippers, paying their homage to the deity, i.e. Śiva Liṅga placed on a pedestal. This is the earliest representation in Mathurā art in which the actual worship of a Brāhmanical deity is depicted. A flying celestial poised in the air showering flowers is also carved in the proper left corner of the sunken arch containing the scene, and is similar to the Deva figures found in Buddhist sculptures of Mathurā. (Cf. Katra Bodhisattva image, Vogel's *Catalogue*, A. 1).

What invests this sculpture with an importance in excess of the iconographic value pointed out above, is the vertical border on the proper left side representing the vine creeper (Vitus vinifera). The cinque-foiled compound leaves and the cluster of grapes are shown alternating with each other. On the lower leaf inside a semi-circular tendril is perched a peacock looking towards the worshipping figures and the deity.

It is of some interest to note that in the repertoire of the decorative motifs familiar to the Mathur sculptors during the Kushāṇa period, the vine occupied an important place, probably next to lotus and Aśoka-tree. It has been possible to trace this feature on the following seven sculptures from Mathura, all of the Kushāṇa period :—

1. Śiva Liṅga relief described above (No. 2661).

2. Big stone bowl (No. 97), about 3′-3″ in diameter, carved all round with a border of vine, 10′-3″ long, of which about 1′-6″ is broken away. The encircling creeper is arranged as an undulatings scroll with about thirty-five leaves and eighteen grape-clusters. It issues forth from the navel of a squatting Yaksha and occurs in this specimen as the most luxuriant representation of this motif at Mathurā. The base is conceived of and represented as full-blown lotus, the symbol of cosmic purity and fulness. The surmounting border of the vine-creeper (*drākshā-vallī*) most likely points to the joys of the 'Cup of Life', which offers its exhilaration to the human indvidual here represented as a Yaksha Fig. 98).

3. Stone bowl similar to the above (No. 662), from Palikheṛa (Fig. 99).

In this the vine motif is shown mixed up with that of Aśoka. The stalk is shown issuing from the mouth of a seated pot-bellied Yaksha, who holds the other end of the stalk in his right hand. The single compound vine leaf and the bunch of grape fruit are clearly visible on the proper left side of the Yaksha figure under the crest of the scroll. The bowl is inscribed on the upper rim and the decipherable portion reads as '*Saṁghīyānaṁ parigaha*' (*Annual Pro. Report*, H. and B. Monts, N. C., 1917, p. 8; Coomaraswamy, *Yaksas*, Pt. II, p. 65). but

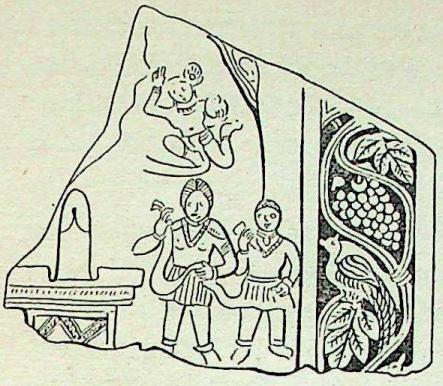


Fig 97 Worship of Śiva liṅga

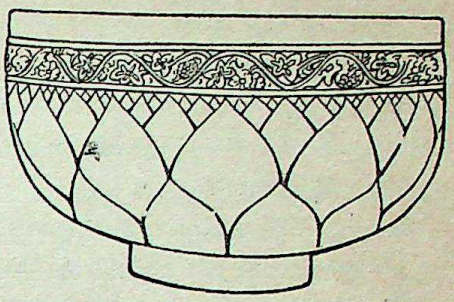


Fig. 98 Stone Bowl

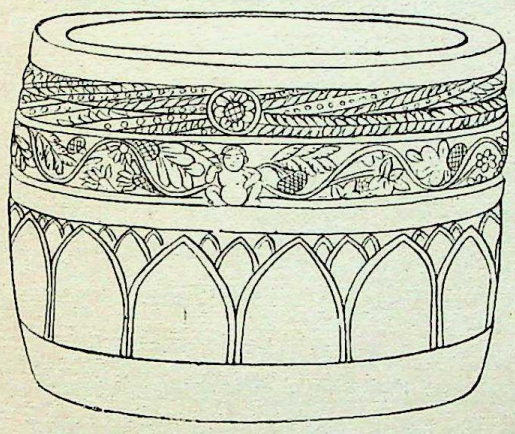


Fig. 99 Stone Bowl

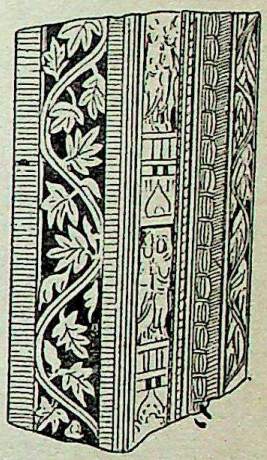


Fig. 100 Fragment of a doorjamb

Eig. 101 A Syrinx Player

Fig. 102 Horned Head

Fig. 103 Horned Head

as some letters are broken away in the beginning it is possible that the name originally read *Mahāsaṁghiyānam*, which would show that the gift was given to the priests of the Mahāsaṁghika sect, which was one of the eighteen schools of Buddhism. That it flourished at Mathura is also proved by another inscription engraved on the pedestal of a Buddha image (No. 1612) reading *Āpanaka-vihāre Mahāsaṁghiyānam parigahe.*

4. Fragment of a proper left doorjamb, which is described in Dr. Vogel's *Catalogue of the Mathura Museum* (p.2). The front proper left side contains a decorative band of Aśoka design. The proper right side of the stone which was turned to the passage of the doorway is decorated with a vine border, having eleven fully developed leaves and three fruit bunches. The vine is shown coming out from the open jaws of a *Makara*, carved horizontally at the base of the decorative band (Fig. 100).

The above four sculptures are preserved in the Museum at Mathura and the following three at Lucknow.

5. Door-jamb (J. 526) carved with a band of undulating vine scroll, in which each curve with the exception of one contains a cluster of grapes and some leaves. The creeper issues out of the navel of a standing Yaksha of corpulent features. It is illustrated in Codrington's *Ancient India*, p. 46, Fig. 17, and in Smith's *Jaina Stupa*, plate 26.

6. Jaina *Ayāgapaṭṭa* from *Kaṅkālī* Tila (J. 253); on one side is the border of vine springing from a Pūrṇa-ghaṭa. (Coomaraswamy's *Yaksas*, Part II; Smith's *Jaina Stupa*, plate X).

7. Relief from Kaṅkālī Tīlā carved with four-petalled and eight-petalled lotuses having on the upper rim the border of Aśoka and on the lower that of vine (Smith's *Jaina Stupa*, plate XXII). As a portion of the relief on the proper left side is broken away, it is not possible to know in this case the source of the vine, whether it was a Yaksha, *Makara*, or *Pūrṇaghaṭa*.

It is interesting to note here that viticulture was known in India from very early times. Watts supposed the plant and its products to have been known for perhaps 3000 years in this country (*Dictionary of Economic Products*, Vol. VI. part IV, p. 264). 'That the earliest classic literature of India necessitates our acceptance of the vine or of a vine as having been known to the Sanskrit authors, is a matter upon which there can be little room for doubt' (ibid. p. 269). Grapes have been mentioned both by Suśruta and Charaka (ibid. p. 263). The best reference perhaps occurs in Kauṭilya who tells us that this commodity was being imported from the lands of Kāpiśī or Harahūra (northern and western Afghanistan): "*Mṛidvīkā-raso madhu. Tasya svadeśo vyākhyānaṁ Kāpiśāyanaṁ Hārahūrakamiti*" (Book II, ch. XXV).

Pāṇini derives the word Kāpiśāyana from Kāpiśī (*kāpiśyāḥ sphak*, IV, 2. 99) and the Kāśikā gives *Kāpiśāyanaṁ madhu* and *Kāpiśāyanī drākshā* as illustrations, which show that the adjective was prefixed before nouns alike to those of Kauṭilya. It is not im-

probable that Pāṇini himself was aware of the grapes of the Kāpiśī region, and that in his own days also the phrase *Kāpiśāyanam* was prefixed to '*madhu*' in the then current form of speech. We possess stronger evidence regarding the import of grape wines from the north-west in the Maurya period, as a correspondence between Bindusāra and Antiochos is recorded in which the former requested the Greek king to send him some figs and raisin wine (Smith's *Early History of India*, p. 155), which must have been the same as the *mṛidvīkā raso* of Kauṭilya.

With the establishemt of the Kushāṇa empire comprising both Mathura and Kabul under one banner, the import of raisin wine on account of increased intercourse with the north-west appears to have received greater impetus. In the early centuries of the Christian era the importation of Yavana wines is also referred to in the literature of the Tamil land (ibid. p.463). Even in the far south where commerce with the Roman empire flourished, the importation of these wines from across the seas was a common feature of trade in this period (ibid. p. 463). It is said that during the last years of the Roman Republic Italy had become such a wine country that the relation between wine and corn was reversed ; wine was exported and corn imported. Cato was of opinion that of all kinds of culture that of the grapes was the most profitable. The cultivation of the vine in the Roman provinces threatened to choke the cultivation of grain to such a degree that the emperor Domitian in an excess of anxiety, ordered that half and more than half of all the vine-yards outside Italy should be destroyed. (Watt's *Dictionary*, p. 267). The Kushāṇa and Roman empires came within six hundred miles of each other. Italy was at this time famed as the favourite land of Bacchus and the evidence of the Kushāṇa art in India amply bears out the popularity of Kubera worship as the Indian counter-part of Bacchus. We find a number of Bacchanalian groups discovered from Mathura (*A.S.R.*, 1922-23, R.P. Chanda, 'The Mathura school of sculpture', p. 167, and pl. XXXVIII, b.). The one form Palikhera (C. 2) preserved in the Mathura Museum actually shows a grape cluster held in the hand of the female attendant standing beside the wife of Kubera. It must have been at this time that the artists adopted the vine motif as a decorative element of their work.[1]

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[1] See Bharhut, foreign soldier with a grape bunch (Barua's *Barhut*, fig. 71. On p. 63 of Vol. III he regards a bunch of grapes as a cognizance of a man of उत्तरापथ).

Vine motif in Q. 3 आयागपट्ट (Mathura musuem).
Vine motif in P. 70 Jamb (,,)
Vine motif in P. 69 (,,)
Vine motif on Sarnath Lintel C(*b*)9, plate XXIII of the Museum Catalogue.
Vine motif on Vema Takshama statue embxroidery design on shoes.
See also Drākshārāma in Ganjam Dt. (*Ann. Bib.* 1936, entry 295).

24. A SYRINX-PLAYER IN MATHURA ART

The head and bust of a female figure in the Lucknow Museum, No. B215(e) is reproduced here as it is more than of ordinary interest. The statue is in the spotted red sandstone of Mathura and was found in one of the mounds at the famous site of Kankali Tila, Mathura. It shows a young woman playing on a syrinx which is made of reeds fastened together in a row and tuned to produce varying notes. This wind instrument is said to have been the invention of Pan, the god of shepherds in classical mythology and therefore known as Pan pipe or Pandean pipe. In the present illustration the number of reeds is eight. They are all of equal length. In the classical pan-pipe they are gradually lessening in length. (Fig. 101).

The representation of the pan-pipe in the Kushana art of Mathura is not within cultural interest. Being a foreign musical instrument its introduction at Mathura points to cultural intercourse between Indian and the Greek world. The Parthians seem to be the agents of this exchange.

In the terracotta figurines from Seleucia also there are similar specimens of Syrinx players. This can be clearly seen on one of the Seleucia figurines, No. 579 (photo 292[1]) published by Wilhelmina Van Ingen.

Seleucia was an important centre of the culture of the Parthians (Pahlavas), under whom Greek forms fused not only with the Iranian but also Indian themes and motifs of classical art and life.

Points of contact between Parthian (Pahlava) and Indian art are noticeable in more ways than one, and especially in the domain of terracottas. Such influences found free scope during the reign of the Kushanas. The present figure also belongs to about the 2nd century A.D.

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1 *Terracotta figurines from Seleucia on the Tigris* by Wilhelmina Van Ingen, Oxford University Press.

25. A NĀGA IMAGE FROM MATHURA

On the morning of 31st October 1941, I went to see the sculptures in the villages of Nagaria and Dharau. Nagaria is a suburb of Mainpuri about a mile from the city and about less than two miles from it is the small village of Dharau. At Nagaria is a colossal Nāga figure of the Kushana period made of spotted red sandstone of the usual Mathura school. The local legend about the colossal Nāga figure is that the figure represents Maindeva to whom is traced the origin of the name Mainpuri. This Maindevo is remembered as a bridegroom of Nagaria who became petrified for having returned to the house after once he had come out of it for the marriage procession. Worship is offered by pouring oil on it by the local people when a marriage ceremony is solemnised. A big fair is held at the place on the full-moon day of Karttiki each year. The image is lying flat on a platform under a *neem* tree and is 6′9″ in length. The feet are broken off at about the ankles and are lying near. The image when complete from head to foot measured 8 ft. Its width across the chest is 26″ and the girth at the mouth including the radiating hoods is 6′2″. The seven serpent hoods are marked on the back by slightly grooved lines continuing to about the whole length of the hooded halo. Although the image is lying at its back a careful observation failed to reveal the existence of an inscription. The image is coated with thick vermillion which has preserved the details of the figure under it almost intact. In style of drapery and ornamentation and in its attitude the image is very much similar to the colossal Mathura Nāgas, *e.g.*, the Chharagaon Nāga. The right hand is broken from near the shoulder and the left was held at the girdle with an *amṛitaghaṭa* now worn out. The figure wears a typical *mukuṭa* and a turban on the head, heavy *kuṇḍalas* in the ear, a short necklace of circular beads round the neck and a flat triangular necklace laid on the chest. The drapery consists of a *dhoti* held by a girdle and a scarf passing near left shoulder and falling on the left side.

The dilapidated platform on which the image stands is about 20 sq. ft. and 8 ft. in height and is approached by steps on its north side. It is built up with fragments of old bricks complete specimens of which measure 15″ to 16″ in length, 8½″ to 9½″ in breadth and 2½″ in thickness. To the north and east of the platform are traces of a *pukkā* floor forming the ground level and built with bricks of the same size. About a hundred feet to the north of the platform is a big tank surrounded by a *pukkā* wall made of *lakhaurī* bricks which is said to be built by the Rani of Mainpuri. The tank explains the existence of the Nāga image in its vicinity. We know it from Mathura archæology that images of Nāgas were installed to ensure perennial supply of water near tanks or *pushkariṇīs* built by pious benefactors. It seems reasonable to infer that the present *pukka* tank marks the site of an ancient *pushkariṇī* which was renovated with the *pukkā* modern walling at some date in the 19th century. It seems that

at this time the big Nāga image which may have originally stood by the side of the tank was shifted to its present side site about a 100 feet to the south of the tank, and at that time an indifferent *pukkā* plartfom seems to have been built with fragmentary old bricks and mud, and the Nāga image instead of being properly installed and erected in a vertical position was deposited on its back in a somewhat careless manner.

From the north-east corner of the dilapidated platform I was lucky to recover a terracotta figurine of a Nāga (ht. 3½") which is unique in one respect from all other Nāga terracottas I have seen so far, The Nāga is represented in its human form as in other figures but on its back there is also shown an actual serpent mounting upwards with its hoods serving as *phaṇāṭopa* over the head of the human Nāga. I consider it as a combination of the anthropomorphic and the theriomorphic representations which are usually found separately and which I was able to discover in one instance in a big stone Nāga image in the Mathura Museum which does not seem to be published so far. The terracotta has a prominent aquiline nose with diamond-shaped eyes roughly etched and is reminiscent of other crude terracotta female figures with bird-like features. It is preserved only up to the waist and should be assigned to about the 3rd century A.D. The provenance of the terracotta from the Nāga platform, although the platform I believe to be modern, can be explained by taking it as an ancient votive figure removed from the original site of the Nāga along with the *debris* constituting the platform.

The marriage party which had reached the outskirts of another village called Dharau, about a mile and a half from Nagaria, is locally pointed out as having turned into stone at the latter place. I visited this site also and found that the sculptures there are far removed in date and style from the big Nāga at Nagaria. They are mostly fragmentary sculptures and architecural pieces of mediæval Brahmanical temples and are mostly of *Kaṅkar* stone and devoid of any historical interest. From amongst the fragments I could recover the upper half of a statuette showing a *kalpvṛiksha* of Jaina mythology having a seated Tīrthaṅkara at the top and a female Yakshiṇī under the right bough, the corresponding male Yaksha figure on the left being now lost. A boyish figure is shown ascending the trunk of the tree. Even this fragment is of some iconographic interest, as similar figures of Jaina *kalpavṛksha* are found elsewhere on Jaina sites. There is one in the Mathura Museum in which a lizard is seen in the same position as the impish figure in the present case.

Frontispiece :

Udayana-Vasavadatta escaping on elephant. Mathura. 2nd cent. B. C.

26. NEW MATHURA HEADS AND OTHER ACQUISITIONS TO THE MATHURA MUSEUM

It will be profitable to study the preceding head from Mathura with its strong Indo-Scythian features, in comparison with another head (ht. 17.3. c.m.) which also originated from some ancient site in Mathura, but has now found its way to the Budapest Museum. I am indebted to Dr. Zoltan de Takac of Budapest for the excellent photograph reproduced here. The Budapest head wears a cylindrical tapering cap with ornamental parallel patterns and is adorned in front with a rosette enclosing an unopened bud in the centre which is typical of the head-gear decoration during the Kushāṇa period. The ears without extended lobes, the eyes and the facial expression confirm this dating. The Mathura head on the other hand should be assigned to the early Gupta period, and not to 1st century A.D. as stated by Mr. Nagar, the frizzled locks (*vellita keśa*) and the distended ear-lobes (*pralamba-karṇapālikā*) pointing to its Gupta affinities.

The question of the subjects represented by these two heads is also of some significance. The head in the Budapest Museum seems to depict a secular figure, probably a portrait figure of an Indo-Scythian personage or dignitary of high rank whose foreign origin is emphatically conveyed by means of the gorgeous cap fitting it. This face no doubt conforms more to a standardised style matured during the Kushāṇa period so frequently seen on the male figures from Mathurā. The same thing could also be said with regard to the two portrait heads bearing monograms, *viz.*, *Nāyasa* (No. 1252) and *Lavaṇa* (No. 1566) now in the Mathura Museum, illustrated in Dr. Vogel's *La Sculpture de Mathura* (Pl. IV, figs. a-b and c-d). The artists even while executing portraits from life, as undoubtedly they did in the Kushāṇa period, unconsciously succumbed to conventionalised types.

But in spite of some traces of a known formula in the facial expression, the Budapest head no doubt represents a secular figure. On the other hand, the identification of the Mathura head with its ribbed cap and frizzled locks is of interest for religious iconography. The figure does not appear to be an attempt to portray from life. The style indicates affinities with Sūrya inconography. The nearest parallel is the head and bust No. D. 1 in the Mathura Museum, wearing an almost similar *kulah* cap, and also having frizzled locks on the nape, and a short beard covering the chin. [Cf. *Journal of the India Society of Oriental Art*, 1937, Brahmanical Images in Mathura, p. 129, Plate XV, fig. 4.] These figures show considerable Sassanian influence in the matter of drapery, and Dr. Hackin observed the same thing with regard to the marble Sun image discovered from Khair Khaneh near Kabul [Cf. Memoir on the Researches at Khair Khaneh, p. 13.] indicating adoptation of a foreign style in the drapery of the solar images of the fourth century A.D.

The plump face and the goggle eyes are still more remarkable. From a close study images of the two attendants of Sum, *viz.*, Daṇḍa and Piṅgala, whose statues made of unspeckled-red sand-stone are common enough in Mathura art of the Gupta period, I am inclined to take the head No. 2844 as one which represented one of the two acolytes of Sūrya, more probably Piṅgala, who stands on the right side of Sūrya and holds a pen in right hand and an inkpot or parchment in left. In this connection the best specimen to compare with is an independent image of Piṅgala, No. 513 in the Mathura Museum wearing bushy hair and *kulah* cap with crescent and globule (*chandra divākara*) sign on it. The rigid treatment of the whiskers and the stylized pruning of the beard continued right into the early medieval period and is traceable in a more deteriorated form in several late images of Piṅgala and Daṇḍa from Mathura made of white stone.

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The following antiquities have been selected for description because they present certain new iconographic features and throw new light to illustrate Mathura art.

First in importance is a terracatta piece (No. 2440, ht. 3½″,) showing a male squatting figure grasping firmly in both of his hands the paws of a fullgrown lion, who is standing at the back and whose beastly fury the human figure seems to have subdued. It is easy to recognise in this an Indian adaptation of the well-known greek sculpture of 'Herakles and Nemean Lion' found from Mathura and now deposited in the Calcutta Museum. The terracotta should be attributed to the Kushāṇa period on account of the similarity of the face of the Herakles having typical ear-rings with other Kushāṇa figures.

Next is reproduced a head (No. 2564, ht. 9″, fig. 102) of spotted red sand-stone, turned to the right, and wearing a peculiar helmet with two recurved horns. This emblem signified the 'Iranian Majesty'. (Kushano-Sasanian Coins by prof Hersfeld, p. 22) and has been traced on the so-called Macedonian soldier type of Coins of Kujula Kadphisis I (see Whithead, Catalogue of Coins in the Lahore Museum, Vol. *Indo-Greek Coins*, p. 173), and also at Mathura from the well-known Indo-Persian capital found from the Chaubara mound, which has four winged animalswit human heads adorned with ram's horns (see Cunningham, A.S.R., Vol. III, p. 18).

There are two more heads (Nos. 157 (fig. 103) and 1511) of this type in the Mathura Museum obtained from Bhuteshwara mound and Asgarpur Village repectively.

Amongst Buddist sculptures we note the upper fragment of a railing pillar (No. 2663, ht. 2-′8 ½″×17 ½″) acquired from a site adjoining Mahāban, showing the worship of the Dharmachakra by two devotees in añjalimudrā. The wheel is only a plain disc, but the new feature in the representation is the background of the Bodhi tree foliage shown very much like that in sculptures from Amarāvatī (Ency. Britanica, Vol. 12,p. 214, plate IV, figs. 1 and 4).

Among Brāhmanical sculptures the bas-relief (No. 2661, ht. 1-′7″) showing a Śiva Liṅga on a pedestal with two worshippers holding thick garlands and wearing coats and trou-

sers or the nothern dress--deserves special notice. The whole scene with a flying celestial showering flowers is corved in a sunken arch, and represents a typical Kushāṇa composition. It is also the earliest representation of the actual worship of a Śiva Liṅga. The vine motif in the left side border is also an important feature.

To the same period must belong the curious sculpture (No 382, ht.1'10" white stone) with three heads having above them the bust of another figure whose divine rank is indicated the halo above them. The whole is unified by the foliage and flowers of the Aśoka tree carved on the back. The image bears resemblance to the well-known Indra and Nāgarāja sculptures of the Mathura Museum, and shows the earliest iconographic representation of the four-faced god Brahmā in Kushāṇa art. There are two other similar, but smaller, images of Brahmā of the Kushāṇa period in the Mathurā Museum. (Nos. 2134 and 2481).

Three other Brahmanical sculptures of the Gupta period are also important in that they originate from the vicinity of Katra Keshava Deva and may have belonged to the Brahnical temple which stood on that site during Gupta times. The first (No. 2577, 9 ½") represents Rāvaṇa lifting mount Kailāśa, on which Śiva and Pārvatī are seated, the former being shown ūrdhvaretas. The scene is full of commotion due to sudden upheaval caused by the tremendous strength of the demon-king.

The second fragment (No. 2664, ht. 8") shows the Trivikrama incaranatioń of Vishṇu, measuring out the worlds with his outstreched left beg. Both this and the former scene may reckon as being amongst the earliest representation of these myths in Indian Art.

The third piece is a pillar fragment showering Yamunā with a *Pūrṇaghaṭa* in right hand standing on her vehicle the tortoise. Such door jambs bearing the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā were a common feature of Gupta temples, and this pillar is strong proof of the existence of a Brahmanical. Gupta temple at Katra Keshvadeva, whose plinth is still traceable.

A unique image of Gupta period is that of Piṅgala, attendant of Sūrya, having a halo at the back of head and wearing a kulah cap, scarf and Persian coat. The pot-bellied god holds a pen in right hand and an inkpot in left. The image is undoubtedly the earliest representation of Piṅgala so far met with in Indian art.

A clay seal with five letters deeply engraved reading Pusadevasa (Pushyadevasya) and a swastika symbol on the knob is important for the early Maurya variety of its Brāhmī script.

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27. MATHURA ĀYĀGAPAṬṬAS

The sculptures from the ancient Stūpa at Kankali Tila, Mathura, which was a monument raised by the pious Jaina community of that place, are highly interesting both for their symbolism and for their quality of art. Of the numerous statues and architectural pieces including railing pillars and *toraṇa* lintels found there none perhaps are so worthy of attention as the small number of beautifully carved stone slabs which bear the technical name of Āyāgapaṭṭas. This name was rendered by Bühler as a "tablet of Homage or Worship", since such slabs were put up in temples, for the worship of the Arhats (*Ep. Ind.* Vol. II, p. 314). It appears that in the domain of Indian art the Āyāgapaṭṭa as an item in the *repertoire* of religious devotees was peculiar to the early Jainas. The Buddhists do not show anything similar to a Jaina Āyāgapaṭṭa amongst the sculptures of their religion found from Mathura, although the two faiths flourished side by side for several centuries and also probably employed the same artists.

There is, however, a word in the early Buddhist art terminology which throws welcome light on the meaning and purpose of an Āyāgapāṭṭa. In the excavations at Jaggayyapeta on the site of the old Stūpa, Dr. Burgess discovered in 1882 three inscribed pillars, bearing each a dedicatory inscription in Prākrit recording the gift of five Āyaka-Khambas at the eastern gate of the Great Chaitya at that place. The great Stūpa at Amarāvati also was adorned with such pillars, since the highly ornamental chaitya slabs from that site exhibiting in miniature the Stūpa in all its details show a row of five columns surmounting a balcony in the procession-path opposite each cardinal entrance. The explorations at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa have also brought to light seventeen inscribed specimens of Āyaka-pillars. According to Dr. Lüders who edited these inscriptions such pillars do not appear to have had any structural function as supporting members, but, besides carring well-known Buddhist emblems, they were utilised for dedicatory inscriptions (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XX, p. 2). The Āyāgapaṭṭas likewise were devoid of an archetectural purpose but were carved with sacred symbols and figures of Tīrthāṅkaras for being worshipped. The words *Āyāga* at Mathura and *Āyaka* at Jaggayyapeta seem both to have been derived from *Āryaka* which in Sanskrit means 'honourable' or 'worthy of reverence'. Since the sacred symbol or the figure of the saint carved on the slab was an object of veneration, the slab on which it was carved rightly came to be regarded as a tablet of homage bearing the technical name of Āyāgapaṭṭa[1].

From the point of view of art the Āyāgapaṭṭas from Mathura rank amongst some of the most beautiful specimens of the Mathura School of Sculpture. They are exceedingly well

[1] The remark of Dr. Burgess that the word Āyaka in Āyakakhaṁbha perhaps means entrance should be modified in the light of the meaning of Āyaka pointed out here (cf. *Amaravati and Jaggayyapata Stupas*, p. III.).

conceived and the composition adequately conveys the meaning of the symbolism they seek to represent. The grouping of the static and moving figures and the arrangement of the religious symbols produces a fine hormonious effect. The Tīrthākñara figure seated in the central circle in meditation, symbolises as it were the bedrock on which Jaina metaphysics bases its conception of world creation. The Arhat figure predominates the whole group, every thing else, viz., the *Triratnas*, the *Svastika* and the other symbols standfi xed in relation to it and revolve round it. An ideal harmony of the static and dynamic aspects of creation seems to have been achieved in art on these Āyāgapaṭṭas (*Figs. 8,104*) The conspicuous *Svastika*on J. 250 with a circle at the centre enclosing the figure of a Jina is primarily a symbol of creation or birth. The *Svastika* has been universally worshipped in India as part of the natal cermonicsal ong with *Shashthīpūjana* performed after the birth of the child. Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa gives an elaborate description of the ceremonial of *Svastika* worship after the birth of Prince Chandrāpīḍa and the custom can be traced to earlier times.

The *Dharmachakra* and the *Triratnas* are other symbols prominently figured on the Āyāgapaṭṭas. Dr. Coomarswamy in his paper on the meaning of *Kha and other words denoting Zero* has shown that the axle point of the wheel represents the ultimate reality, the "rock of ages", serving as the central point of the great wheel of creation. This wheel known as the *Dharmachakra* symbolises the two-fold cosmic forces of rest and motion. The centre of the wheel is firm, devoid of changes, but its circumference is the rallying plane of infinite forces whirling and moving under the governance of a central fixation based on the navel of the wheel. The wheel is thus the most appropriate symbol to express the harmony and synthesis between the two creative forces and conditions one of which is referred to in the Vedas as *apihita*, hidden, and the other *jāyamān*, manifested. The perfect *Dharmachakra* forming the central figure on the Āyāgapaṭṭa represents in a beautiful manner the above two aspects of the wheel symbolism. The eight Maidens of Space, *Dikkumārikās*, poised gracefully in a circle around the peryphery of the *Dharmachakra* are according to the Jaina Texts goddesses of the Bhavanapati class, presiding over the quarters of space, and as stated in the Jambūdvīpa-prajñapati they come first in the priority to celebrate the glorious event of the birth of a *Tīrthaṅkara*.

The *Dharmachakra* and the elephant also appear as symbols surmounting the two side pillars on Āyāgapaṭṭa No. J. 249. Just as the Buddha is spoken of as the bull and musk-elephant among great spiritual leaders (*Mahagani—asabha—gandhahathi*, *Ep. Indi*, Vol. XX, p. 17), similarly the Jainas apply to their Tīrthaṅkara the virtues implied by these noble comparisons. The elephant, the bull, and the lion were accepted as common symbols both amongst the Jainas and the Buddhists, and the two arts bear testimony to it.

The scheme of eight auspicious symbols (*ashṭamaṅgalas*) is adopted for decorative purposes on Āyāgapaṭṭa No. J. 249, and the same is repeated, although somewhat weakly on No. J. 250. The symbols that may be readily identified are the two fish (*Mīna-Mithunā*), the pot of jewels (*Ratna-pātra*), Triratna, lotus garlands (*Pushpa-dāma*), Śrīvatsa and the full

vase (*Pūrṇa-kumbha*) . The second symbol in the upper row may represent the celestrial abode (*Deva-vimāna-ghara*) which was one of the fourteen dreams seen by the Brāhmaṇi Devadaṇḍā at the time of her conceiving as described in the *Kalpasūtra*.

The Āyāgapaṭṭas with their emphasized symbolical character have greater affinities with the earlier Indian art as known to us in the monuments of Sāñchī which are the products of an age in which symbols constituted the language *par excellence* for the expression of religious and philosophic thought. That phase fell into the background after the emergence of the cult images of the Tīrthaṅkaras and the Buddhas, both perhaps serving a common religious urge in about the 1st century A.D. In the art of Mathura itslf the symbols gradually give place to the image. But on the Ayāgapaṭṭas there is still a stage of transition and it is clearly apparent that the symbols there are not less important a medium of the artist's language than the figure of the principal saint. They may be taken to belong to about the early first century A.D., when the symbol worship and the image worship existed side by side, the one as a significant heritage of the past and the other as an usher of a new era.

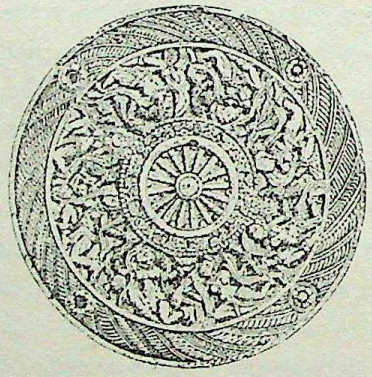

Fig. 104 A Āyāgapaṭṭa from Mathura

28. BRĀHMANICAL IMAGES IN MATHURA

The rich and famous school of sculpture which flourished during the Kushāṇa and Gupta periods (cir. 1st century—6th century A.D.) at Mathura has to its credit a considerable number of Brāhmanical images, in addition to the vast and varied collections of Buddhist and Jaina sculptures which are well known. Belonging to the formative period of Indian art when the earliest images of gods and goddesses in all the above three religions were being evolved, these statues are of the utmost importance. We know that early examples of the Buddha image have been found at Mathura, which according to Coomaraswamy was the place where the image of the Buddha originated[1], a conclusion in which there is much more substantial truth than is at first recognised.

The images of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras also for the first time appear on the *Ayāgapaṭṭas* discovered from the site of the Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā, and may belong to the beginning of the first century A.D.[2]

Like in Buddhist and Jaina statuary, the first iconographic forms of the Brahmanical gods and goddesses can be traced in Mathurā. The fact that Mathurā artists were fashioning the deities of these three religions at one and the same time, must have had its own causes in the religious history of India of the early Kushāṇa period. It appears that Mathurā was the nucleus of powerful devotional movements in the religious thought of the Jainas, the Buddhists and the Hindus. So far as Hinduism is concerned we know that the religious movement centring round Vāsudeva Kṛishṇa and his brother Balarāma originated at this ancient city. It is therefore natural that the urge for shaping the gods in their human form should have been felt strongest at Mathura.

For studying the origins of Brāhmanical images we should concentrate on the earlier statues of the Kushāṇa and Gupta periods. Their total number may be about five hundred. The following is the full list of the pantheon for these two epochs: I. Kushāṇa: 1. Brahmā. 2. Śiva. (*a*) Śiva in '*liṅga vigraha*'. (*b*) Śiva in '*purusha vigraha*'. (*c*) Śiva as *Aṛdhanārīśvara*. (*d*) Śiva with Pārvatī. 3. Kārttikeya. 4. Gaṇapati. 5. Vishṇu. 6. Sūrya. 7. Indra-vajrapāṇi. 8. Kāmadeva. 9. Balarāma. 10. Sarasvatī. 11. Lakshmī. 12. Durgā Siṁhavāhinī. 13. Mahishāsuramardinī. 14. Sapta Mātṛikās. 15. Nāgarājñī.

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[1] The Indian Origin of the Buddha image, *J.A.O.S.*, Vol. 46, 1926.

[2] The only exception, an earlier Jaina Tīrthaṅkara image, is the recently discovered image of the Maurya period from Bankipur, published by K.P. Jayaswal, *J.B.O.R.S.*, March 1937, pp. 130-32.

R. P. Chanda, *A.S.R.*, 1925-26, p. 180, 'The earliest images of the Tīrthaṅkaras have been found at Mathura'.

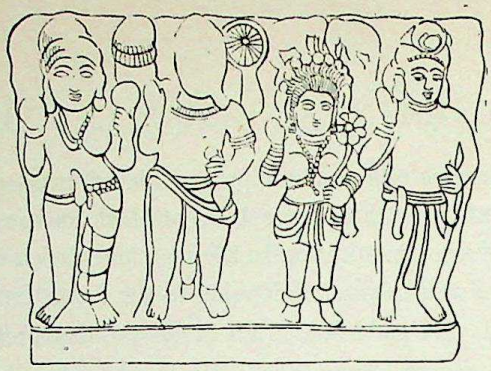

Fig. 106 Early Brāhmanical relief showing four gods

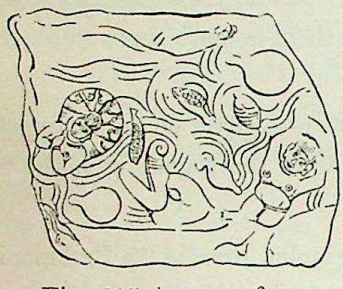

Fig. 105 A scene from Kṛishṇa's life

Fig. 107
Balarāma

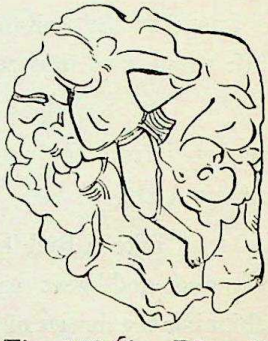

Fig. 108 Śiva Pārvatī

Fig. 110 Sūrya

Fig. 109
Ardhanārīśvara

Fig. 111 Sun-god

II. Gupta period : All the above with the addition of the following : 16. Hari-Hara. 17. Rāvaṇa lifting Kailāsa. 18. Vishṇu as Trivikrama. 19. Piṅgala. 20. Daṇḍa. 21. Navagrahas. 22. Gaṅgā. 23. Yamunā. 24. Āyudhapurushas.

Of this list only Sūrya, Śiva-liṅga and Gaja-Lakshmī were known in the earlier art preceding the epoch of the great Mathurā school.

BRAHMĀ. In the Brāhmanical triad Brahmā comes first as the creator of the univrse. The idea of Trinity consisting of Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva seems to have been fully realised in the religious philosophy of the Kushāṇa age. Brahmā is shown as the deity with four faces (*chaturmukha*). We have three Kushāṇa images of Brahmā in the Museum. The earliest image (382) shows the god with three faces and a haloed bust superimposed at the back of the central head to complete the number of four heads. On the reverse is carved an Aśoka tree similar to that in Nāgarājñī and Indra images (392) which also belong to the Kushāṇa period. The right hand of the projecting figure is held in *abhayamudrā* and the left shoulder is covered with drapery like in Buddha images of this period. Statute No. 2134 shows an identical arrangement with the difference that the three lower faces have all beards and matted locks. Statuette No. 2481 shows only three heads, as the fact of the invisibility of the fourth one in a front view came to be gradually recognised. A halo is shown at the back of the head. Another feature of importance is the pot belly, which in the case of Brahmā persists throughout later art.

VISHṆU. We get evidence of Vishṇu worship in the Śuṅga period from the Besnagar pillar of Heliodoros and the Ghosuṇḍi inscription of Saṅkarṣaṇa Vāsudeva. At Mathurā itself a lintel of the time of Mahākshatrapa Śoḍāsa (1st century B.C.) mentions a shrine dedicated to Bhagavān Vāsudeva[1]. But the earliest representation of Vishṇu in human form is found in the Kushāṇa period, the Vishṇu image appearing as almost a replica of the Budhisattva image with two additional hands holding a long, heavy *gadā* and a *Chakra*. Image No. 2487 is typical and shows all these features clearly. The prominent necklace of Vishṇu is noteworthy as it is taken from the images of Indra (cf. 392). In some statuettes Vishṇu wears the high '*kirīṭa*' of Indra which may be due to the fact that Vishṇu as Upendra was looked upon as the younger brother of Indra.

It is strange that no early image depicting the life incidents of the cowherd deity Kṛishṇa has come to light at Mathura. An exception may be deemed in the case of a relief (1344) of the Kushāṇa period bearing a scene which Daya Ram Sahni interpreted as one showing Vasudeva walking across the river Yamunā to transport the new-born Kṛishṇa to Gokula for safe custody[1] (*Fig. 105*), I agree with this view and think that the relief is the earliest representation of a scene from Kṛishṇa's life.

[1] *Archæology and Vaishṇava Tradition*, by Rama Prasad Chanda, *A.S.M.*5.

The Kushāṇa relief No. 2520 acquired from the collection of the late Pandit Radha Krishna, appears as a veritable document of Brāhmanical iconography (*Fig. 106*). It shows the following four figures, all standing with right hands in '*abhayamudrā*' : 1. Two-armed Śiva in '*ardhanārīśvara mūrti*', with the right half bearing male and the left half female features, viz. breast, extended hip, long *dhotī*, and a bracelet round the foot. Śiva is shown '*ūrdhvaretā*', which is of unique importance for the study of the early phases of Mathura Śaivism. 2. Four-armed Vishṇu, holding a heavy mace and a *Chakra* in the two additional hands. The two normal hands are exactly like those in the Bodhisattva images, i.e. the right in '*abhayamudrā*' and the left holding a monk's bottle of long neck and conical bottom. Of all the Vishṇu images found in In dia, this may be said to be the earliest specimen, and may be assigned to the 1st century A.D. It shows the transition from a Buddhist to a Brāhmanical image. 3. Two-armed female figure holding a lotus in her left hand as in the Hārītī images of the Kushāṇa period. Above the canopied head the sculptor has shown a pair of miniature elephants in order to distinguish Gaja-Lakshmī from Hārītī. This Gaja-Lakshmī type is distinct from the well known Gaja-Lakshmīs rising in the midst of lotuses[2], of the Śuṅga period found at Sāñchī, Budhgayā, Kosam and Anantagumphā, etc. The stamp of a Kushāṇa period Hāritī is obvious in her form and composition. 4. Two-armed male figure holding a purse in the left hand and a mace-like staff under the left armpit. It depicts Kuvera without his usual corpulence. We also have one Gaṇeśa statuette without this feature which is otherwise almost universal in both cases (No. 1112). These details make the above relief of unique importance for a knowledge of the earliest features in the iconography of these divinites.

A fragmentary statuette of the Kushāṇa period (1010) showing an eight-handed male figure is of exceptional interest Of the four right hands which are preserved, three seem to carry the mount Govardhana, '*pāsa*' (or *śakti*), and '*daṇḍa*' and the fourth one doubled at the elbow is stretched towards the breast and also held an indistinct object. This represents the *Virāṭ* form of Vishṇu and is the only male figure of the Kushāṇa period in which such multiplicity of hands is visible.

With the advent of the Gupta period Vishṇu worship received a fresh impetus and images became much more common. There were Vishṇu temples at Kaṅkālī (image in the Lucknow Museum, H. 111), Jamālpur (G. 7, Vishṇu torso), Gāyatrī ṭīlā (1342, colossal Vishṇu-bust), etc. There is also ample evidence to show that a magnificent Brāhmanical temple dedicated to Vishṇu was built at the site of Katra Keśavadeva[3] by the emperor Chandragupta II

[1] A.S.R., 1925-26, pp. 183-84.

[2] Sāñchī, north *toraṇa* of Stūpa I, fig. 53 in *H.I.I.A.* ; Bodhgayā, C.H.I. Vol. I, fig. 50 ; Kosam, *Annual Bibliography*, 1934, fig. d, pl. II ; Anantagumphā, *C. H. I.* Vol. I, fig. 75. Cf. also Coomaraswamy's article Śrī-Laksmī, *Eastern Art*, January 1929.

[3] Katra-Keśavadeva, the Birth-place of Kṛishṇa, by V. S. Agrawala, *Gītā Dharma*, Benares, Vol. I, pp. 666-76.

whose inscription was also unearthed from this place. Architectural and sculptural pieces which formed part of this building were recovered in excavations and are kept in the Museum. One piece shows Vishṇu in his *Trivikrama* incarnation (2664) with the left leg stretched aloft. Dancing and adoring Jāmbavān, the demon-head typifying Brahmāṇḍa and kneeling Pṛithivī Devī are shown. Vishṇu wears the '*vaijayantī* and '*ekāvalī* necklace. The panel is surmounted by a dwarf Gupta railing and was enclosed between two pilasters.

A perfect example of a Gupta Vishṇu is E. 6 of Vogel's *Catalogue*[1]. It shows all the highest qualities of the Golden Age, the face revealing the contemplative serenity of celestial *samādhi*. The elaborate crown is adorned with the jewel (forming a '*triratna*' shape with its scroll), lion-faces emitting pearl festoons '*siṁhāsyodgīrṇa mauktika-jāla*' and a 'makarikā' ornament consisting of two addorsed alligator heads. The figure wears a '*vaijayantī yajñīya suvarṇa-sūtra, keyūras, ekāvalī*' and *śatayashṭika devachanda* necklace, and also a creased clinging loin cloth (*sūkhshma vimala kaṭi-vastra*) held by a girdle technically known as '*netra-sūtra*' in contemporary literature on account of its similarity with the cord round the '*manthana daṇḍa*".[2] The image was four-armed. The fore-arms separated near the elbow, the bifurcating line being still visible on the left side.

Another important image of Vishṇu (2525) resembles the above in its artistic decoration but shows the god with a Nṛisiṁha face on the right and a Varāha face on the left. Coomaraswamy published the bust of a Nṛisiṁha-Varāha Vishṇu from Mathura (now in the Boston Museum), which is almost like our figure. He says 'The figure exhibits the broad shoulders and slender "lion" waist of the Indian ideal type, with the firmness and fullness of flesh and massive modelling characteristic of the Gupta period; it is an important document equally of art and iconography'[3]. This Viśvarūpī Vishṇu presents a combination of Varāha and Nṛisiṁha *avatāras*. The Museum also has a terracotta panel (2419) showing a similar four armed Vishṇu, two of whose arms now broken must have held the symbols '*padma*' and '*śaṅkha*' in their natural form, and two others were placed on the heads of dwarfish '*chakra*' (male) and '*gadā* (female) '*āyudha purushas*' squatting in '*utkuṭikāsaṇa*'. Kālidāsa, Raghu. 10, 60, mentions the dwarfish statues of the Vaishṇava '*āyudha purushas*' in the Gupta period. The representation of the symbols both in their natural and personified forms and also the placing of the right leg a little in front of the left, suggest affinities of this image with the Para-Vāsudeva form mentioned in Hindu Iconography'[4]

[1] Cf. St. Kramrisch, Die figurale Plastik der Gupta Zeit, p. 22, fig. 5; *Wiener Beitraege zur Kunst und Kulturgeschichte Asiens*, vol. V, 1931.

[2] This *netra-sūtra* cord used in churning is still known as 'netī' in the Hindi speech of North India.

[3] *Bulletin of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts*, Dec. 1919 No. 104, pp. 60-62, Gupta torso of Vishṇu.

[4] T. Gopinath Rao, *Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, pp. 242-43.

BALARĀMA. Patañjali refers to Balarāma in his Mahābhāshya (Kielhorn, Vol. I. p. 426.) "let the power of Kṛishṇa increase with the assistance of Saṅkarshaṇa". Saṅkarshaṇa is the name of Balarāma, the elder brother of Kṛishṇa, who is said to have changed the course of the Yamunā near Mathurā by his ploughshare. The legend must have been popular in the days of the Bhāshyakāra in the 2nd century B.C. Again in a quotation given by Patañjali mention is also made of temples dedicated to Kuvera, (Bala) Rāma and Keśava (Kṛishṇa) : प्रसादे धनपतिरामकेशवानाम् (ibid. Vol. I. p. 426).

It is not surprising that an image which must have once adorned such a temple, was actually found by the late Pt. Radha Krishna in 1929 from the village named Junsuti, six miles off Mathurā on the road to Govardhana. It was sold to the Lucknow Museum and is now kept there. It is published here from photos found in the record of the late Panditji (*Fig. 107*). The back entry gives its ht. 2'-6". Balarāma is standing with a canopy of six serpent hoods and holds the '*musala*' in his right hand and the '*hala*' in his left, both the '*āyudhas*' resting against his shoulders. He wears a very conspicuous turban, heavy earrings in cloven ears, a torque with single cylindrical bead and double wristlets. The upper body is nude and the lower is draped in a *dhotī*, its creased arrangement, triangular fold and the girdle being exactly similar to those on the ancient Yaksha statues of the Śuṅga period. The image can not be later than the second century B. C., and must be regarded as the earliest representation of any Brāhmanical deity in the whole field of Hindu iconography. Its importance therefore cannot be exaggerated for throwing light on the most controversial question of the origins of iconographic art in India. The Bankipur Tīrthaṅkara image of the Maurya period and the Mathurā Balarāma image of the Śuṅga period together prove that the religious tradition of the land had allowed the shaping of the principal deities in human form for purposes of worship much earlier than is often conceived by archaeologists in relation to the question of the origin of the Buddha image.

ŚIVA. The god Śiva is known to us in an earliest form from the Guḍimallam liṅga of the Śuṅga period. The Bhīṭā Śiva *liṅga* of the '*pañcha-mukha*' type comes next in order. After that we get the representation of Śiva both in liṅga and '*purusha*' form at Mathura in the Kushāṇa period. Śiva worship at this time must have been extremely popular in the religious life of this city. D. R. Bhandarkar editing the Mathurā Śaiva inscription of the time of Chandragupta II, showed that a powerful branch of the Pāśupata Śaivas adhering to the tenets of the teacher Lakulī was established at Mathurā by one of his four disciples, Kuśika, in the beginning of the 2nd century A. D.'[1] 'This pillar also shows the representation of god Lakulīśa, a form of Śiva holding a '*daṇḍa*' and his trident. We also find Śiva standing against his Nandī bull on the reverse of the coins of Kushāṇa emperors, and a well-known coin of Vāsudeva shows the polycephalic god *Oesho* who can be on other than Pañchānana Śiva or Īśa. The heroic Vema takes pride in calling himself a Maheśvara in the legend of his Śaiva coins. How devoutly the

[1] *Ep. Indica*, Jan. 1931, p. 5.

alien Kushāṇa chiefs paid homage to the great god is vividly depicted on a recently acquired bas-relief (2661) which shows a liṅga installed on a pedestal and two Kushāṇa noblemen in the attitude of worshipping it with garlands and flowers (*JISOA*, vol. IV, Pl. XXIII, Fig. 1). It also contains a flying '*deva*' performing '*pushpa-vṛishṭi* as in Buddhist images. A relief slab of the Kushāṇa period showing Śiva and Pārvatī standing as a typical *dāmpatī* gives us the earliest human form of Śiva different from a Yaksha (G. 52). But for the *ūrdhvareta* so prominently shown in the case of Śiva, we would take it as a common '*mithuna* relief.'[1] Śiva is two armed, there is no bull or any symbol except that the right hand is in '*abhaya mudrā*'. Śiva wears earrings, torque and scarf and there are no '*jaṭās*. This scene becomes very much transformed, though retaining its essential features, in the Gupta period as evinced by the Śiva-Pārvatī and Nandī relief (2084) carved on both sides. Both Śiva and Pārvatī hold a '*nīlotpala*' that is symbolical of their married life.

One of the most unique Śiva images from Mathura is illustrated by Coomaraswamy in his *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (Fig. 68). It shows the four-armed '*ūrdhvareta*' Śiva carved in high relief against a *liṅga* in the same manner as the Guḍimallam Śiva[2]. The Gupta sculptors of Mathurā also made Ekamukhī Śiva *liṅgas* of the Bhumara and Khoh type. We find them installed in several places in the city, still in worship[3](cf. also Museum collection, 2312). We have also specimens of two-faced (462) and five faced[4] (516) Śiva *liṅgas* of the Gupta period. Most probably the five heads have reference to the Īśāna, Tatpurusha, Aghora, Vāmadeva and Sadyojāta forms of Śiva. Of the '*līlās*' of Śiva not one has been traced in Kushāṇa art. The Gupta sculptures, however show a representation of the famous scene of Rāvaṇa lifting the mount Kailāsa on which Śiva and Pārvatī are seated (2577 ; *Fig. 108*). Iconographically as well as artistically this piece is of great importance. It is full of lively commotion resulting from the unprecedented upheavel. The giant king with protruding eyes is exerting his full vigour to summon all the resources of his great might. The wavy lines and the reticulated breaks in the ridges of Kailāsa express the strain to which it was put reminding us of the famous and almost contemporary description in the Meghadūṭa of Kālidāsa (158), viz. कैलासस्य.....दशमुखभुजोच्छावसितप्रस्थसंधेः ।. The eminences of the peak as well as the ridges

[1] For an image of Śiva-Pārvatī from Kosam, showing *ūrdhvaliṅga* Śiva holding the right hand in *abhaya* and an *amṛita ghaṭa* in the left, see *A.S.R.* 1913-14, part II, plate LXXC. It is inscribed and belongs to the Gupta period. (Fleet, *G.I.I.*, p. 266).

[2] I found a photo of this from the collection of the late Pt. Radha Krishna giving in the back entry its ht. 2'-5", but the present whereabouts of the image are unknown. It may be in some European private or museum collection.

[3] A note on a Gupta Śiva Liṅga at Mathurā, V. S. Agrawala, *J. U. P. H.* Society ,July 1935, pp. 83-85.

[4] For illustration, see my article in Hindi on the Brāhmanical Sculptuers in the Mathurā Museum, fig. 19, *Journal of the Hindustani Academy, Jan.* 1937.

appear like dense masses of clouds layered one upon another. Pārvatī sits to the right of Śiva, and her left hand finds support on the right shoulder of her lord, who is bracing up at a time when the great oscillation must have convulsed all nature.

The Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva (326; *Fig. 109*) though known in Kushāṇa times (cf. Pl. XIV. Fig. 2) was handled by the Gupta artists with an unexcelled perfection. It illustrates those elements that are present in two cosmic forces which are irresistibly drawn towards each other to embrace and fuse themselves, but are held back to preserve their entities by an invisible axis.

SŪRYA Images of Sūrya of the ancient Indian type seated on a chariot of four horses are known from the art of Bodhgayā (Fig. 61, H. I. I. A), Bhājā (Fig. 24, H. I. I. A), and Anantagumphā,[1] where chhāyā and Sajñā also occur. The Mathurā examples of the Kushāṇa period, however, are different. They are shown squatting in European fashion, wearing the Northern dress (*udīchya vesha*) consisting of a coat, trousers and padded boots, and holding a dagger in the left hand between the legs and a lotus cluster in the right. The chariot is drawn by two horses (894)[2].

The number of horses later on is increased to four (cf. Sūrya image D. 46, in which the solar orb is also shown), and subsequently to seven. We have an interesting variety of Sūrya images in the Gupta art of Mathura, showing Sūrya dressed like a Sassanian king. One soapstone statuette (1258; *Fig. 110*) in which the two acolytes Piṅgala and Daṇḍa also occur, has a beard and a round apron style tunic fringed with pearls like the solar image from Khair Khaneh discovered by Hackin, by which it appears to have been inspired. Its age should coincide with the reigns of Shapur II and his successors Ardashir II and Shapur III, i.e., between 309 and 386[3] A. D. Another bust in the Mathura Museum representing the Sun god (D. 1 of Dr. Vogels *Catalogue*) is even more marked by Sassanian influences, bearing the 'sun and moon' *Chandra-divākara*) symbol on the *kulah* cap. He has frizzled bushy hair as in Gupta figures, a bearded chin (*śmaśrula mukha*) of the honey-comb design (cf. '*saraghāvyāpta kshaudrapaṭala*', *Raghuvaṁsa*, IV. 63), knotted scarf and pinafore like cuirass (*Fig. 111*).

Though the two solar attendants occur on the Khair Khaneh relief, Mathura is the only place where independent images of Piṅgala and Daṇḍa of the Gupta period have been found. Pot-bellied Piṅgala (513) has a halo and is holding a pen in the right hand and an inkpot in the left. His hair is bushy and on the *kulah* cap occurs the globule and crescent sign. A Gupta relief from Kaman shows the eight Grahas, Ketu being left out. Except Sūrya, the other six wear *jaṭā-jūṭa* and Rāhu is in *tarpana mudrā*. This agrees with *Mahā-*

[1] Hackin's *Memoir on the Researches at Khair Khaneh near Kabul*, p. 15, footnote. See also *Anceint Monuments in Bihar and Orissa*, by M. H. Kuraishi, p. 273.

[2] A bigger example is illustrated in Vogel's *La Sculpture de Mathura*, plate XXXIIIb, and Coomaraswamy's *H.I.I.A.*, fig. 64, where it is identified as Kushāṇa king.

[3] *Recherches Archéologiques au Col de Khair Khaneh prés de Kabul*, by J. Hackin, p. 13.

bhārata, Sabhā Parva, ch. 11, verses 28-29, which mention only eight Grahas attending the the audience-hall of Brahmā (*pitāmaha-sabhā*).

KĀRTTIKA. The figure of Kārttikeya with his name inscribed occurs on one series of the Yaudhaya coins about the second century A.D.[1] Of about the same period is a statuette in the Mathurā Museum (2332) showing the standing figure of haloed Kārttikeya holding a spear in the right hand and a cock in the left[2].

A singular image of the Gupta period in the Mathurā Museum (466) shows Skanda seated on his peacock (cf. *mayūra pṛishṭhāśrayiṇā guhena, Raghu.* VI. 4) with an important iconographic feature, viz. the performance of his *abhisheka* by four-faced Brahmā on the right and Śiva on the left side holding jars, both wearing matted locks.

GAṆEŚA. A Mathurā frieze of the Kushāṇa period (2325) shows a row of five elephant-headed Gaṇas very similar to the Amarāvatī relief depicting the same figure[3] (about 2nd cent. A.D.). Of about the same period is a statuette (758) in which elephant-headed Gaṇeśa appears as an ithyphallic nude figure with pot-belly and *nāga yajñopavīta*. He is two armed and is tasting the sweet balls out of the cup in his left hand. These are the earliest Gaṇapati figures so far known.

Miscellaneous gods : Vajrapāṇi. A torse (E. 24) shows the god Vajrapāṇi holding a double thunderbolt. He wears heavy ear-rings, torque and flat triangular necklace like Bodhisattva images. But the feature that shows the Brāhmanical nature of the image is the conspicuous *vanamālā* arranged on the left side which justifies his identification with Vajrapāṇi Indra of Hindu mythology (cf. Kālidāsa, *Raghu.* IV. 42). The *vaijayantī* is the principal distinctive feature of the Brāhmanical gods employed by the Kushāṇa and Gupta sculptors.

KĀMADEVA. A beautiful terra-cotta (2452) of about the first century A.D. shows the god Kāmadeva standing in a flowery field with a sheaf of arrows in the right hand and a long sugar-cane bow (*ikshu-dhanus*) in the left hand. He is standing upon the chest of a young man who is in a supplicating attitude. I am indebted to Dr. Johnston (letter dated Oxford, 8th Dec. 1936) for identifying the scene with an old legend about Kāmadeva in which the leading persons are the fisherman Sūrpaka and the princess Kumudvatī. The details are uncertain, but apparently Kumudvatī fell in love with Sūrpaka, who did not return her love, till he was conquered by Kāmadeva. Aśvaghoṣa refers to the legend in his *kāvyas*, viz. *Buddhacharita*, XIII, 11 and *Saundarānanda*, VIII, 44, which as may be inferred must have been very popular in his days.

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[1] *J. B. O. R. S.* 1936, p. 61.

[2] A very similar Kārttikeya image with spear and cock was recently found at Taxila. See *A.S.R.* 1934-35, p. 31, plate VIII (f) where it is doubtfully identified with Kuvera.

[3] Coomarsaswamy, *Yakshas*, part I, plate 23, fig, 1, p. 23.

INDRA. In Buddhist iconography Indra and Brahmā occur as attendants of the Buddha. Some times Indra alone is shown paying homage to the Buddha in the Indraśaila Guhā at Rājagṛiha but in the Kushāṇa art of Mathura the iconography of Indra had a much greater significance. There is a unique image in which Indra is shown as polycephalic (having many heads) figure, i.e. with one figure in the centre and five others emerging out of his shoulders and head. This should be identified as the representation of the *Pañchendra* form or this deity to whom detailed reference is found in the Pañchendropākhyāna of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. Indra is also depicted as Yaksha Vajrapāṇi, i.e. holding a thunderbolt in his hand. The one distinguished feature of Indra images is a high cap, rather a projecting crown, on his head. Some times a third eye is also shown over his forehead.

AGNI. In the Pañchāla coins of Agnimitra we always find a deity with a halo of flames. He is depicted on the Kushāṇa coins as an Iranian deity under the name of Athso. No image of the early Kushāṇa period has been found but there are several Gupta sculptures showing Agni as a Brāhmanical deity with a halo of flames round the body and also with *jaṭājūṭa*, a beard, *Yañjopavīta*, pot-bellied and holding *amṛitagaṭa* in the right hand.

DURGĀ. There are images of Durgā having four arms and seated on a lion assignable to the Kushāṇa period but the form, which was extremely more popular, was that of Mahishāsuramardinī, i.e. goddess Durgā in the form of killing the demon. Her images with two, four and six arms are found in considerable number in Kushāṇa and Gupta art. The most eloquent description of her exploits and power is contained in the Devī-Māhātmya of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. The worship of Mahishāsuramardinī became popular throughout the country and we find a magnificant representation of the conflict of the goddess riding on a lion with the demon Mahishāsura in the early Pallava art.

SAPTA-MĀTṚIKĀ. In the Kushāṇa period the worship of the female goddess of the form of Reality as so many goddesses found its most tangible expression as the sculptures representing a group of the Sapta-Mātṛikās (Seven Divine Mothers), Brahmāṇī, Vaishṇavī, Ambikā-Pārvatī, Indrāṇī, Kaumārī, Vārāhī, Nārasiṁhī, and Chāmuṇḍā.[1]

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[1] These were the images of Śakti of the respective gods. As a matter of fact these were developed in the mystic symbolism of Yoga as depicted Sakties of various Chakras or nervous centres in the body. These were known as the Mātṛikās. Gradually their number increased to 8, 9, 10, 12 and 16 (Shodaśa Mātṛikās). All these again were the varying symbols of an esoteric discipline of thought and meditation.

29. AN EARLY BRĀHMANICAL RELIEF FROM MATHURA

The present relief [Mathura Museum No. 2520], which is 7½″ in height, 10″ in length and 2″ in breadth, was in 1933 selected by me from the collection of the late R. B. Pt. Radha Krishna and subsequently acquired by the U.P. Government for the Curzon Museum. On a close study it appears to be one of the earliest Brahmanical pieces of the Kushāṇa period, and from its consents may be taken as an iconographic document in sculpture. There are in all four standing human figures, three male and one female ; but if we take into account the first hermaphrodite figure combining characteristics of both sexes, the number of goddesses represented would become two. (*Fig. 106*)

The First Figure : Ardhanārīśvara

The first figure (6½″ high) shows a composite form of man and woman. It represents Śiva as Ardhanārīśvara, *i.e.*, the aspect in which he had become one with his consort Pārvatī, and in which the fusion was symbolically expressed by representing the great God as combining both male and female characteristics in his own person. The description of the Ardhanārīśvara form is given in the *Mastya Purāṇa*, ch. 258, and the genesis is also well explained in a sotry of the *Śiva Purāṇa* :—

'Brahmā first begot a number of male beings, the Prajāpatis, and commanded them to create various other beings. They were found later on to be unfit for the task for which they were intended and Brahmā feeling uneasy at the slow progress of creation, contemplated on Maheśvara. The latter appeared before him in the composite form of male-female and asked him to cease feeling distressed. Thitherto it did not coccur to Brahmā to create a female also, and at the sight of this composite form of Maheśvara he realised his error ; thereupon he prayed to the female half of Maheśvara to give him a female to proceed with the act of creation : Brahmā's r quest was complied with and the creation went on afterwards very well.' [Gopinath Rao's *Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, pp. 321-322].

This story accounts for the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva. The present relief from Mathurā represents the earliest iconographic form of Śiva's *ardhāṅga* aspect which has been found in Indian art so far. At Mathurā too, although independent image of Śiva and Pārvatī or Umā-Maheśvara *mūrtis* are common enough, this is the only specimen of Ardhanārīśvara belonging to the Kushāṇa period.

The image has two arms. The right hand is shown in *abhaya mudrā* as usual in the Buddha-Bodhisattva images of the Kushāṇa period and is connected with the slab by means of a projection similar to that in the Katra Bodhisattva image of the Mathura Museum [Dr. Vogel, *Catalogue*, A. 1ī]. The left hand holds a round mirror like the one held by the woman on railing pillar No. J. 5. Above the head is a prominent *jaṭā-jūṭa* covering slightly more

than half the portion of the head. The coiffure on the left side is not clearly preserved as the image probably remained under water. The ear-pendants are alike in both ears. The chest on the right side is that of a man, and of a woman on the left marked by a *stana-parisara*. The girdle is sharply distinguished on the right and left sides of the loin. But the most important iconographic feature is the *ūrdhva-liṅga* :—

लिंगार्धमूर्ध्वं कुर्यात्तगं,—मत्स्यपुराण 258, 7.

This feature also occurs on the four-armed combined Śiva-and-Liṅga image of the Kushāṇa period from Mathura, which was first described by Dr. Coomaraswamy. [cf. *History of Indian and Indonesian Art, p.* 67. fig. 68].

The right leg is slightly bent, the left is straight and wears a dhotī reaching down to the ankles, and also has a *pāda-valaya*.

It is evident from this image that Mathurā must have been an important centre of Śaiva religion during the early centuries of the Christian era, when numerous *liṅga* and *purusha vigraha* images of Śiva were produced. Dr. Bhandarkar, working out the genealogy of the Śaiva teachers in his discussion of Chandra Gupta II Pillar Inscription, has shown that Mathurā was the centre of the Pāśupata school of Śaiva religion during the first quarter of the second century A.D., and that the asceitics in the line of Lakulī's first pupil Kuśika were settled at Mathurā. [*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXI, pp. 6-7].

Second Figure : Four-Armed Vishṇu

The standing figure next to Ardhanārīśvara is that of four-armed Vishṇu. Vishṇu images make their first appearance in the Mathura art of the Kushāṇa period, and even amongst them, this image is decidedly one of the few aerliest specimens which show the connection of Vishṇu with the Boddhisattva iconography of that period. Images of Bodhisattva Maitreya are two-armed, holding the right hand in *abhaya mudrā* and a nectar flask in the left hand. The earliest Vish u images were provided with two additional hands, holding *gadā* and *chakra* on the right and left sides respectively The mace tapers downwards, and is touched at the top by Vishṇu with one of his hands.

In this relief Vishṇu shows all the above features. Holding *gadā* on right and *chakra* on left, he shows his right hand in *abhaya mudrā* and holds an alabastron with the left hand. There are two other statuettes in the Mathura Museum, No. 933 from Palikhera and No. 948 from Isapur, in which the two front hands are similarly shown. According to the orthodox canons Vishṇu is required to hold *padma* and *śaṅkha* in these hands.

We have evidence in Mathurā art that the *amṛita ghaṭa* was soon replaced by the conch, held in the front left hand near the girdle. But the *abhaya* attitude continued much longer, probably accommodating the lotus in the palm of the right hand.

The miniature figure on the left of Vishṇu is not very distinct, but in all probability his vehicle, Garuḍa, seated to front.

THIRD FIGURE : GAJA-LAKSHMĪ

The third standing figure is a two armed female representing Vishṇu's consort Lakshmī. Her right hand is shown in *abhaya mudrā* and with her left hand placed near the girdle she holds a lotus stalk surmounted by a full-blown lotus flower, which may more appropriately be called a lotus parasal or *padmātapatra* described by Kalidāsa in association with Lakshmī [*Raghuvaṁśa*, IV, 5, पद्मा पद्मातपत्रेण...].

Lakshmī has a hood on her head as found on most of the goddesses of the Kushāṇa period. This representation is in every detail similar to that of Kushāṇa period Hārītī portrayed with Kubera or independently. To discriminate her from Harītī the sculptor has shown a pair of miniature elephants surmounting the hood and standing facing each other. The images of Gaja-Lakshmī are the first to have been represented in sculpture amongst all the Brahmanical gods and goddesses. She is repeated twice on the portions between the architraves of the right pillar, belonging to the north toraṇa of Stūpa I at Sanchi [Cf. Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.* fig. 53]. Another early but conspicuous form is found on an arch of the Ananta Gumpha cave in Orissa [Cf. *Cambridge His. of India*, Vol. I, fig. 75], which was a Jaina monastery [150 to 50 B.C.]. Dr. Coomaraswamy writes : 'In Buddhist art this would represent the Nativity of Buddha, in Hindu art Gaja-Lakshmī, but what it represents in Jaina art, unless perhaps the Nativity of Mahāvīra, we do not know.' [*H.I.I.A.*, p. 38]. Most probably it was an ancient motif commonly understood to be representing beauty and prosperity (Śrī-Lakshmī).

The Kushāṇa art shows several examples of Gaja-Lakshmī carved independently, but the present relief is *the only specimen in which Vishṇu and Lakshmī have been shown together.*

Between Lakshmī and the next figure there is also a miniature elephant head marking her vehicle.

FOURTH FIGURE :

The last in order is a two-armed standing male figure, who from the *abhaya mudrā* of his right hand appears to be of divine rank. In left hand he holds a purse placed near the waist. His dress and ornaments are identical with those of the Vishṇu figure. There is a long staff near his left shoulder clutched under his armpit.

In a relief depicting Ardhanārīśvara Śiva, and Vishṇu with his consort Lakshmī, Brahmā would have fitted most naturally to make up the *Trimūrti*. But there is no distinguishing mark to take the figure as Brahmā. The purse points to its identification with Kubera, and the absence of a pot belly though uncommon for Kubera, should present no insurmountable difficulty in the way of his identification. We find in Mathurā art both Brahmā and Gaṇeśa figures without their protuberant belly and the usual corpulence. It is the same here with Kubera. This statuette represents the *earliest iconographic* forms of Śiva, Pārvatī, Vishṇu, Lakshmī and Kubera, five important deities of the Brahmanical pantheon.

30. INDIA REPRESENTED ON A SILVER DISH FROM LAMPSACOS.

Lampsacos was an ancient Greek colony in the Mysia district of Asia Minor situated immediately opposite Gallipoli on the Hellespont. Its ancient name is preserved in the modern village of Lapseki. It was the chief centre of the worship of Priapus, a gross nature god closely connected with the culture of the vine. It was celebrated for its silver utensils in ancient times and is now well known for the discovery of the Lampasacos treasure consisting of may precious objects of art.

For students of Indian history the place is of special interest as here a beautifully carved silver dish was discovered bearing a strikingly original representation of India as a woman seated on a chair supported on elephant tusks. The dish is now preserved in the Istanbul Museum of Antiquities.[1] According to Warmington[2] who published this silver dish. India is surrounded by mammals and birds which reflect Rome's commerce with India by the land route which was chiefly in use for such itmes of Indian export. He assigns the dish to the first or second century A.D. (*Fig. 112*)

The female figure occupies the centre of the dish, and the birds and animals are arranged in three rows and in pairs, one on each side of the figure. The bird on the proper right is of the parrot family, representing the large Indian parrakeet found throughout India. It resembles the many other representations of this bird in Indian sculpture and art.

The bird in the corresponding left position is according to Warmington a Guinea fowl representing some African species, although he sees that its head is unlike that of a Guinea fowl. He thinks that it was added amongst things Indian under some mistaken notion of the artist. Dr. Coomaraswamy on the other hand takes it to resemble a Himalayan quail.[3] But the quails do not have the pair of lappets on the throat as seen in this figure.

The two animals in the second row near the ivory legs of the chair were supposed by Warmington to be Hanumān monkeys, but that is not correct. They represent dogs of the tigirine breed which was produced as a cross between a bitch and a tiger.

Fortunately we possess a detailed account of this class of animals as recorded by Alexander's historians. A demonstration of their extraordinary strength and ferocity was given in the presence of Alexander himself, who witnessed one of them matched to a lion and

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[1] I am indebted to Mr. Aziz Agaw, Director of the Museum of Antiquities, Istanbul, for kindly sending me an enlarged photograph of the dish from which the present illustration is reproduced. (Fig. 112)

[2] *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, 1923, p. 143.

[3] Coomaraswamy in a review of Warmington's book in Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 51, p. 181.

cut to pieces bit by bit but not yielding before his adversary up to the last. This filled him with great regret that a specimen of such superb fearless spirit should be lost. However, four dogs of this class were presented to him.[1] This breed was reared in the old Kekaya country of the Salt range as recorded in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa :

अंतःपुरेऽतिसंवृद्धान् व्याघ्रवीर्यबलोपमान् ।
दंष्ट्रायुक्तान्महाकायान् शुनश्चोपायनं ददौ ॥

(Ayodhyākāṇḍa, 70, 31).

'The king of the place presented to his nephew Bharata dogs of enormous size, who were brought up in the palace, had terrible fangs, and possessed extraordinary strength equal to that of tigers.' These creatures formed an important item of trade between India and the Western world and their fame had reached even up to Greece in very early times.

In the third row two human keepers with flowing scarfs are restraining with ropes two carnivorous animals, the one on proper right being a tiger and the other on left a panther or leopard bearing ring spots on his body.[2]

The female figure is seated in the centre on a chair supported on elephant tusks resting on the ground. She wears a *sārī*, most likely with one end tucked behind, *i.e.*, the *sakachchha* style common amongst Maratha women in Western India. The sandals (*chappals*) on the feet deserve notice and are a Roman feature. In proper Indian art women generally do not wear shoes. She wears on her head a turban with a twisted role in front. Under it is shown the front line of frizzled hair, arranged on each side of the face in three superimposed tiers each consisting of three strands. We have yet to know if this style of coiffure was known to aristocratic Roaman matrons in the first or second centry A.D. In India this style of hair appears on the terracotta figurines of the early Gupta period, about 4th century A.D. The significance of the two small rods projecting from the truban is not clear.

The crooked object in the left hand is a bow.[3] The right hand is held in *abhayamudrā*, *i.e.*, the pose for imparting protection. It is a happy conception of Mother India to show in one hand the *abhayamudrā* and the bow-wielding attitude in the other hand. The attributes and emblems of the figure suggest its most obvious identification with India [Bhārata-Lakshmī] as Warmington suggested.

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[1] Mcrindle : *Alexander's Invasion*, pp. 363 ff., where the naterial is brought together in an appendix.

[2] Warmington takes the right one as a leopard and the left one as a tiger ; Coomaraswamy as a hunting cheetah and a lion respectively. The left one with ring spots is certainly what we call *guldār tendua* (गुलदार तेंदुआ) in Hindi a panther.

[3] I am indebted to Col. Stuart Piggot of the R.A.F. for this suggestion conveyed to me in a letter by Mr. T. G. E. Powell of the R.A.F.

There seems to be no support to identify in the form of this figure any particular goddess from the Hindu pantheon. The attributes in her hands and the associated birds and animals do not convey the details of any religious figure.

Western Asia was familiar with carved Indian figures, and especially Indian ivory from very early times. In the Palace Inscription of Darius from Susa the import of Indian ivory is specially mentioned for building the Palace.

The artist who carved this beautiful dish in silver deserves much praise for his ingenuity in one respect, *viz.*, associating Indian ivory in the representation of the figure in the form of the legs of the delicate chair. This feature pointedly refers to India as the object of portrayal. The art of this dish is distinguished by a remarkable freedom from conventions. It is eloquent in its expression and shows some independence of technique. For portraying a subject like this, no ready-made conventional formula existed before the engraver. He had therefore to fall back on his own resourcefulness to devise an effective symbol language for conveying the intended theme. There is no doubt that he succeeded eminently well in portraying India as a woman with fidelity to formal elements then associated with India in the contemporary commercial world. The entire conception is no doubt original and happy.

Fig. 112 Silver Dish from Lampsacos

VII
GUPTA ART

31. A SURVEY OF GUPTA ART

The surviving records of Gupta civilisation present to us a brilliant picture of advancement in literature, religion, philosophy, social and human ideals, and none the least in art, which ensemble is a mirror of all that was graceful, elegant, sweet and noble in that culture. The permanent spiritual values of life had been cast into an aesthetic mould that we call art. The art creations of this Golden Age are expressions of the spiritual harmony and blissful realisation that were the hall-mark of the superior motifs of thought and life comprised in Gupta culture. There was a passionate desire to cultivate the beauty of the body in all its aspects, e.g., in the dressing of hair as seen in the charming styles of coiffure both in paintings and sculpture, in the elegant diaphanous drapery which aims at revealing the hidden beauty of the figure, the beautiful ornaments on the head, bust and limbs that pressed into service glittering gold and jewellery to enhance physical charm, but with a restraint that is the sign of high nobility. Dance and music constituted the life-breath of the people's culture who regarded them as superior to even religious meditation :

नृत्यतां गायतां चैव नानावाद्यं प्रकुर्वताम् ।
यथा संतुष्यते देवो न ध्यानाद्यैरिति श्रुतम् ॥

(*Jaiminīyāśvamedha, 12.22*)

"When the people dance and sing and play on their several musical instruments, they make the Deity happier than by their meditational practices—thus have we heard".

This was the radiating spirit of buoyant life in the Gupta period. Verily aesthetic culture was wedded to spiritual culture during the Golden Age, as never before and after. Life is rich session of beauty, a *lāvaṇya sattra*, or *rūpa sattra*, in which the real emphasis is directed to invoke the presence of Śrī-Lakshmī as a blessing on the visage of our earthly existence. The Goddess of Beauty is the supreme divinity to be realised as the aim of all our integrated efforts, and objects of art are but symbols of her sparkling effulgence. Besides her concrete manifestation in many a beautiful form comprised in the octave of aesthetic creativity, Goddess Śrī as the consort of Vishṇu fills the cup of life with superb ambrosia for the ennobling of the human mind and spirit. This confers a higher purpose on *Rūpa* or Beauty. The Gupta citizen was conscious of this supreme mission ; he realised that life should be filled with forms of external beauty in order that it become a fit shrine for the permanent beauty of the spirit as manifesting through the higher moral and religious perfections. Each higher being is a scaling summit of *pāramitās*, moral and spiritual perfections, and the beauty of the body and the charm of objects that attend are invariable concomitants of that supreme realisation. Such was the positive idealism of life in the Gupta age—beauty and moral perfection must go together ; beauty and purity are like the warp and woof of that richly embroidered fabric termed "Life" : this is the meaning underlying the statement of Kālidāsa—*na rūpaṁ pāpa-*

vṛittaye (beauty—but not for sin)—in the inspiring message and essence of the aesthetic culture permeating the Golden Age.

This magnificent and courageous striding of the human spirit into the spheres of concrete realisation is the key-note of Gupta culture. Art provides abundant illustration of this golden synthesis. Gupta art, be it painting, bronze, sculpture, or terracotta, is essentially beautiful. Men and women demonstrate in their person the highest ideals of physical charm. Sensuous beauty is conveyed through an idiom that is easily comprehensible. There is a genuine feeling of joy writ large on the visage of the figures that are so beautiful. Their grace is heart-bewitching, their placid charm haunts the mind, and the heart undergoes a new baptism under the graceful countenance of the Gupta figures.

During the Gupta period, the beauty that showed itself in images, reliefs, sculptures and temples, was intended to reflect the glory of the Divine Principle called Deva or Vishṇu or Śiva, etc. Vishṇu's heaven is the supreme abode of the cosmic moral order and the perfection of all physical forms. Religious experience consists in a simultaneous vision of these two perfections. This conviction had a genuine significance for the Bhāgavatas (*Fig. 113*). They believed that the physical world around them must be transformed into a creation of real charm so that it may reflect the glory of heaven where Vishṇu's own presence made everything so effulgent. The acceptance of the Bhāgavata Dharma was at once an invitation to share in the divine feast of beauty. The Divine must be made manifest to visual experience through beautiful temples and religious establishments where carved reliefs are fixed as mirrors of heavenly beauty and divine glory. The religious shrine was no common building; it was rather the embodiment of the universal desire to recapture and recreate on earth something that was in heaven, to realise that *rūpa* of Lord Vishṇu, which no human mind could conceive and no physical eye could ever see:

विष्णोरिवास्यानवधारणीयमिदृक्तया रूपमियत्तया वा।

(*Raghuvaṁśa, XIII.5*)

"Its form is beyond conception either in extent or in nature".

The invisible Lord should be cast in a concrete form to bestow fixity on Him in time and space. This function is served by the shrine, the image and the worship there, all three being enriched with the devotional and meditational powers of the human mind. Thus the *prāsāda* loaded with beautiful religious sculpture, plastic forms and decorative elements, together with an architectural symbolism of great richness, became a dynamic factor in the assertive aspects of Gupta culture. It stood as the most dominant symbol of all that was best in literature, art, religion and metaphysics. The carved reliefs depicting themes from Puranic legends were documentaries replete with symbolical significance. Thus the architectural planning of a religios temple, with its circumambulatory railing, stairway, terrace, focal shrine, cella, image, decorative doorframe, friezes, string-course mouldings, an intricate *śikhara* veneered with *gavākshas* and topped by an *āmalaka* and its *kalaśa*, was considered to mark

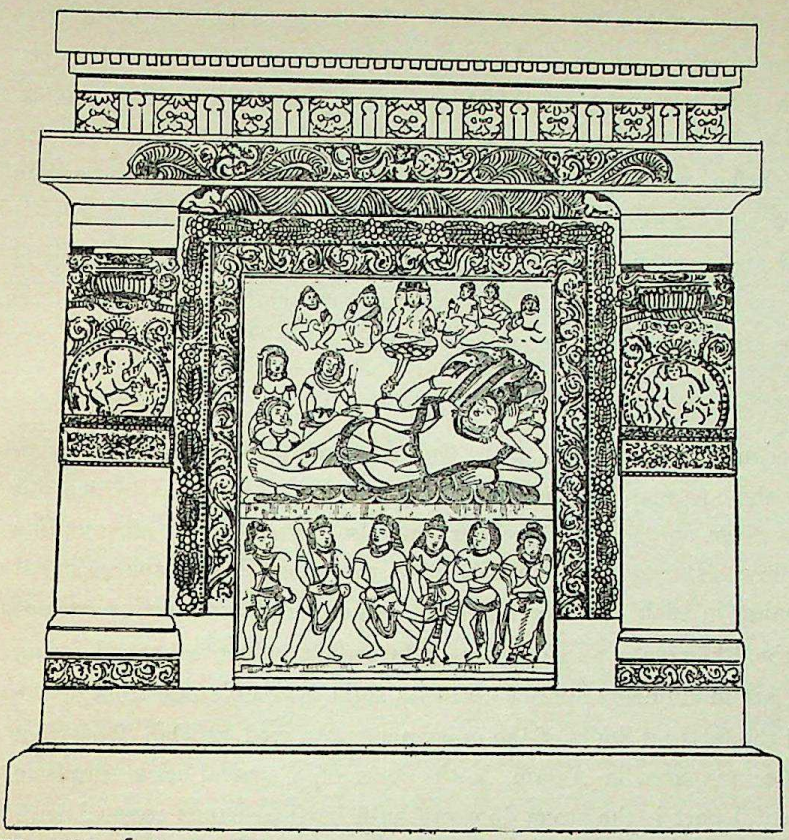

Fig. 113. Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu on a Rathikā of the Devagrah Temple

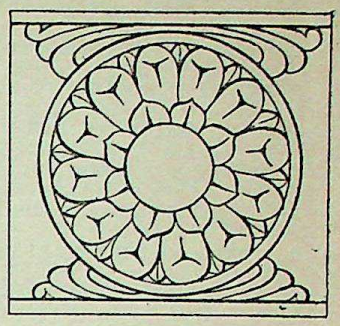

Fig. 116

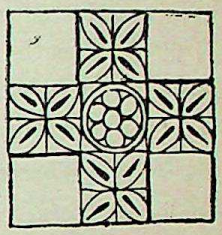

Fig. 117

Fig. 115. A terracotta figurine from Ahichhatrā

Fig. 114. A terracotta figurine from Ahichhatrā

a supreme event in the life of the community, and depended for its success on the completest expression of its moral and material responses. The shrine stood as a visible symbol between man and God, as the emblem of human endeavour blest by divine grace showering from above. To understand the springs of life and thought in the Gupta age, one should understand the eloquent symbolism of the shrine, whose interior was lighted up with divine forms rapt in *samādhi* and peace, and the exterior adorned with an unusual decorative fervour drawn from a wide range of plant, animal and human motifs or semi-divine forms. The understanding of art-forms is an invitation to unravel the mystery of its symbolism, especially where the esoteric context is all-important in creating the outer form and symbolism is but the essential language of metaphysical thought.

Art and religion became closely wedded in the Gupta period to command an unprecedented creative enthusiasm and to map out movements of universal dimension, which not only filled the entire country from one end to the other, but also inundated the surrounding regions in a peripheral overflow. It was truly a nation-wide movement in the sphere of art with many a centre functioning in each direction and each region displaying a spontaneous exuberance. Wheresoever the Bhāgavata religion spread its benign influence backed by an impassioned literary appeal, art monuments sprang up in its train as visible reflectors of the popular surcharge. We find the farthest limits of the movement preserved at Dah Parbatiya in Tezpur District on the Brahmaputra in Assam, in the form of a typical brick-temple in Gupta style. Its most beautiful part is the stone doorway with vertical bands covered with floral and scroll designs, but the most typical feature is a pair of flying geese on either jamb which is a unique representation of the *mīṅgalya vihaga* motif mentioned in the *Bṛihatsaṁhitā* of Varāhamihira. The influence of the art of Madhyadeśa is patent in every detail of sculpture and architecture, whether the monument was raised in the east or in the west. The monuments were sited on the geographical routes of commerce and general communication and it is easy to discover the principles of planning to link each region with the other. To the west of the Brahmaputra, the country of Puṇḍravardhana, now comprised by Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bogra, Rajshahi, Malda, etc., has yielded a large number of Gupta sites and antiquities. Vaṅga (East Bengal), Samataṭa (the Gangetic Delta), Suhma (West Bengal called Rāḍha) and Puṇḍra (North Bengal), these were clearly marked divisions of the Gupta empire under Samudragupta, each fostering a local school of art, but all together bearing the hall-mark of Gupta style, especially in the refined creations of the terracotta figurines. This rich and fertile land of Vārendra lying between the Brahmaputra on the east and the Kosi on the west and watered by the parallel streams of the Mahānandā, Apunarbhavā, Ātreyī, and Karatoyā (from west to east) was once the cradle of Gupta culture, from which wave after wave travelled via the sea and overland routes to Burma, Malaya and Indonesia, influencing the art and culture of those peoples.

The next crucible of Gupta art and culture was the region of Aṅga and Mithilā with flourishing centres at Champā and Vaiśālī, the latter being an important centre on the trade-route north of the Ganga, and also a political capital receiving the special attention of the royal house owing to its alliance with the Lichchhavis. Vaiśālī, the modern Basarh in Muzaffarpur District, has produced a large number of the inscribed clay sealings and terracotta plaques. On the Ganga was situated Pāṭaliputra, the capital of the empire, known far and near as the 'City of Flowers', and famous throughout Jambūdvīpa for the fashions and fancies of its citizens, whose aesthetic zeal is preserved in numerous sculptures and clay figurines from old sites in Patna, viz., Kumrahar and Bulandibagh. Recently the late Dr. A. S. Altekar exposed a terracotta plaque of unusual quality showing the figure of a rake (*viṭa*) with a challenging look and vigorous expression so natural to the leader of the courtesan's quarters of Pāṭaliputra. A subsidiary arm of the artistic acivity of this period extended towards the south of the Ganga up to Nālandā and Rajgir and thence to the west through Bodhgaya towards the Sone Valley covering the Uchchakalpa territory of the Parivrājaka Mahārājas and also what was then known as the Āṭavikarājya, as well as the fertile valleys of the Betwa, Sindh and Chambal. There is a cluster of Gupta sites in this region, the main commercial routes being all along dotted with art centres as prominent landmarks or stages of journey. The long route connected Magadha with Ujjayinī, intersected towards the east by the Śrāvastī-Kauśāmbī-Chedi sector and towards the west by the Mathurā-Vidiśā sector, all three taking within their lap almost all the principal monuments of this virtual courtyard in the mansion of Gupta culture. The valley of the Sone and its upper feeder Johila (ancient Jyotīrathā mentioned by Kālidāsa, *Raghuvaṁśa*, VII. 36) was an important highway towards the Chedi country or Jabalpur, and the eastern line of Gupta monuments stood along the Kosam-Jabalpur line of communication. This was an ancient route from Mauryan times and the modern railway line follows it. A few miles from Satna, in the former Nagod State, was built the great *stūpa* of Bharhut in Aśokan times, later enlarged by stone railings and gateways. The Gupta architects built near Nagod the small Śiva temple at Sankargarh. Uchahra (ancient Uchchakalpa) is a station on this line, and the beautiful Śiva temple of Bhumra is only six miles from here. Another important Gupta centre was Nachna-Kuthara, only about ten miles from Bhumra in the erstwhile Ajaygarh State. At Nachna there were two Gupta temples, one the early so-called Pārvatī temple and the other later, dedicated to Śiva. At Kari-Talai was also built a Gupta shrine, just midway between the headquarter of the Tons on the left and the Sone on the right. Down below on the route is Tigowa where a beautiful Gupta temple has been found. South of Tigowa only a few miles distant is the ancient site of Rupnāth where Aśoka had put one of his edicts. At the upper end of the sector just after Prayāga have been found the Gupta sites at Bhiṭa (ancient Sahajāti) and Gadhwa (ancient Bhaṭṭagrāma); at the latter place sculptural remains of a very magnificent Gupta temple of the time of Kumāragupta had been found by Cunningham. Besides stone there were also brick temples with

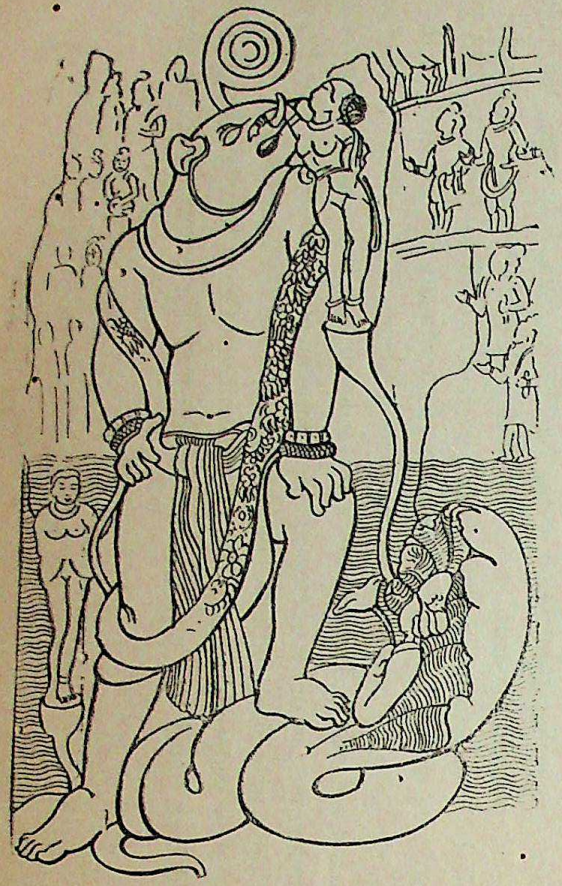

Fig. 118. The Varāha Avatāra-Udayagiri

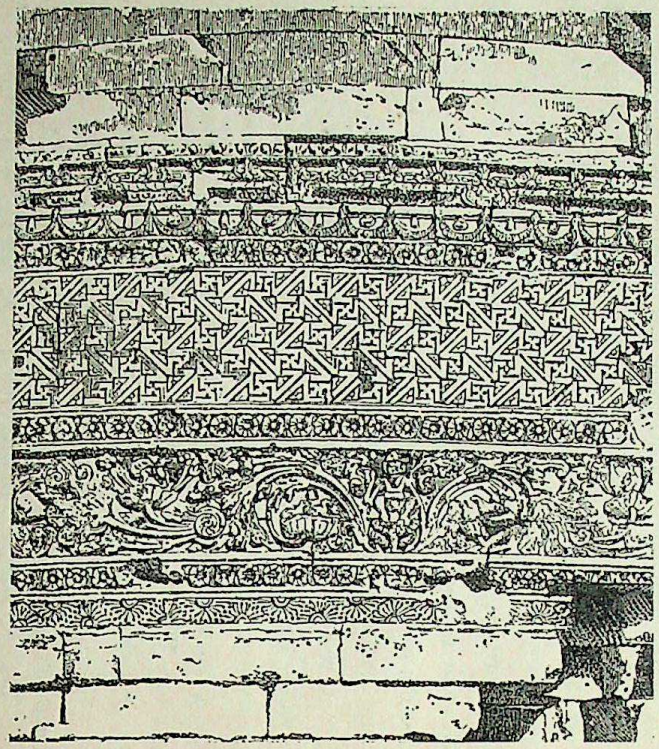

Fig. 119. Decorative Panel from Dhamekha Stūpa-Sarnath

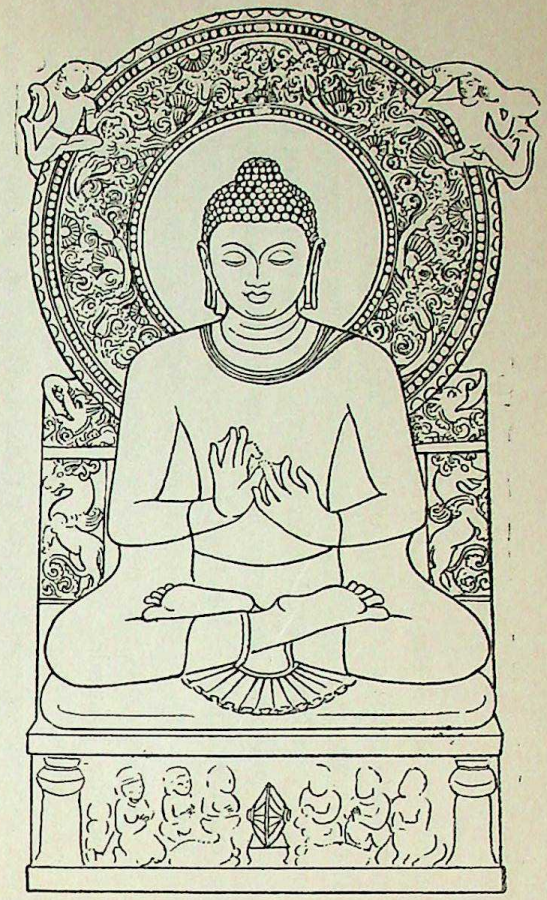

Fig. 120. Buddha-Sarnath

moulded pillars, pilasters and reliefs. Terracottas and moulded bricks (*Figs. 114-7*), formed a very popular media of aesthetic expression during the Gupta and post-Gupta times.

Along the western vertical sector connecting Mathura with Bhilsa, marked by the river Betwa, the number of Gupta monuments is large enough ; those at Deogarh, Udayagiri, Sanchi and Eran being famous. The Daśāvatāra temple at Deogarh is a veritable gem of Gupta sculpture and architecture. Its carved reliefs and the decorative doorway are inspired works of great artists, in which one is face to face with the equipoised and restrained power of their aesthetic creations (*Fig. 113*). The cluster of monuments on the Udayagiri hill, only five miles from Bhilsa (now Vidiśā), preserves celebrated works of Gupta carvers. In the words of Coomaraswamy, "The Varāha Avatāra of Udayagiri is of unsurpassed splendour and unabated energy ; here Vishṇu as the Primal Boar raises the earth (goddess) from the cosmic waters at the initiation of a new cycle of creation (*Fig. 118*)".[1]

The small fertile valley between the Betwa and its tributary the Bina was adorned by its Bhāgavata citizens lavishly through the erection of a number of temples. The chief centre was Eran (ancient Airikiṇa) on the left bank of the Vīṇā river as an important stage on the route from the east towards Ujjayinī, and from the north linking Mathura with Vidiśā. The temples dedicated to Varāha, Vishṇu, and Narasiṁha are typical Bhāgavaṭa monuments with a wealth of gigantic sculptures and beautiful reliefs, and also the monlithic Vaishṇava pillar, 43′ high, set up by the two devotees of Vishṇu, Mātṛvishṇu and Dhanyavishṇu in the reign of Budhagupta in A.D. 485. The small Śiva temple at Mukandara just on the point of the mountainous pass between Kotah and Jhalawar is in simple early Gupta style but charming in its carved reliefs.

The resourceful builders in this period evolved the technique of brick shrines conceived from top to bottom in terms of moulded courses and terracotta plaques loaded with religious and secular scenes as well as floral and geometrical designs of infinite variety. From Shorkot in the Punjab to Mirpur Khas in Sindh, and from Bhitargaon in Kanpur District to Sirpur in Raipur District, there are hundreds of Gupta brick temples of which an account as yet remains an unwritten chapter in the glorious records of the Golden Age. Cunningham wrote about the Shorkot finds : "The moulded bricks are the most characteristic feature of all the old cities in the plains of the Panjab. They are found of all sizes, from about 6″ to 18″ in length. The variety of patterns is infinite".[2] Some of them were decorated with bangle designs for the wrist, called *kaṭaka* (*kaḍaga* in the *Aṅgavijjā*), for the feet, called *khaḍaga* (*Aṅgavijjā*), with leaves, petals, and sepals, with floral rosettes and lotuses, with trumpeting elephant heads (*hatthika* in the *Aṅgavijjā*), with the trident or the *kuñjarāksha* motifs of diaper variety. There were rectangular and square (*lekhakāra*) or even round bricks (*maṇḍaleshṭakā*).

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, "Indian Sculpture," *The Art News*, New York, April 27, 1929, p. 45.

[2] Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India, Report for the Year* 1872-73, Vol. V, Calcutta, 1865, pl. XXX.

Cunningham obtained similar material at Bavanni, ten miles from Montgomery on the Ravi,[1] at Gulamba and Asraur.[2] A very large number of such ornamental bricks was obtained by Hiranand Shastri from Sahet-Mahet, and typical specimens are still *in situ* fixed in the brick *stūpa* at Sarnath. This was the technique of broadcasting aesthetic culture by means of transferring geometrical, floral, animal and human patterns to essential building material like bricks and baked pilasters. Its possibilities were fully exploited, as evidenced by the large number of monuments distributed over an extensive area. As Bāṇa has suggested in the *Kādambarī*, the architecture in stone and in baked clay enjoyed equal rank (*stambhita iva, likhita iva, utkīrṇa iva, pustamaya iva*) and the production of clay and stucco work on a mass scale beautified all the distant quarters of space. As already stated, the Dah Parbatiya temple in the Darrang District of Assam was made of bricks, with terracotta plaques discovered around the stone doorframe, which have been considered to be the best examples of terracotta art known at present. The style was flourishing in Bengal as demonstrated by the finds from ancient sites in Dinajpur, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Bogra and Malda, and last but not the least at Paharpur where the tradition as developed later has preserved a veritable feast of ornamentation in the thousands of plaques fixed in the temple. Continuing through Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the line of monuments extends to the Rang Mahal region near Suratgarh in Bikaner, and then crossing the Thar Parkar desert in the *stūpa* of Mirpur Khas in Sindh. The moulded brick and terracotta plaques and pilasters from the temples at Rang Mahal and in the vicinity which once were highlights in this region of the Dṛishadvatī are some of the gems of Indian plastic art. There is amongst them a figure of the Chakra-Purusha of Vishṇu and another of Ahirbudhnya, a form of Rudra worshipped by the Pāśupatas. Thus it is evident that this region once came under the influence of the Pañcharātra Bhāgavatas who were the strongest advocates of the view that religion must be made concrete through shrines, pillars or art monuments. A similar phenomenon was witnessed in the Fatehpur District of Uttar Pradesh where the banks of the Ganga are dotted by numerous Gupta temples in brick and terracotta like the magnificent fane at Bhitargaon in Kanpur District. The rich merchants who had amassed wealth by the riverine trade along the Ganga donated it to founding many religious establishments and art monuments in their territory. The western-most extension of this movement is embodied in the Great Stūpa (Maheśākhya Chaitya) at Mirpur which must have been the result of an enlargement of the earlier monument there. The selection of its site was quite happy, being on the junction of two vital commerical arteries, viz., the one transversing north Gujrat and south Rajasthan to Pāṭala in Sindh. The same route passes through Barmer to Hyderabad (Sindh) at present, but in ancient times it had much greater importance as the connecting link on the one hand between the marts of Barygaza (Bharukachchha) on the mouth of the Narmada and of Ujjayinī in Malwa, which was the richest trading town in the whole of Asia and rightly celebrated as the *Sārvabhauma Nagara* or the City International in the Gupta

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 104-5.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 112-4., pl. XXXV, figs. 1-12.

age, and on the other the Central Asian markets, from which flowed an uninterrupted stream of commodities along the two routes on both banks of the Indus which were picked up at Pāṭala. These routes are mentioned with their two sectors both in the Pāli and Sanskrit-Buddhist literature, and the occupation of Sindh by the Indo-Greeks and their successors the Śaka Satraps of Ujjain was the outcome of wars waged to control the rich trading prize of the Dvārāvatī-Bāhlīka route. The magnificent *stūpa* at Mirpur Khas shone as the visual symbol of the double glories of this route. Very naturally its decorative motifs and figure sculpture display the art influences of both Gandhāra and Malwa, which were its two feeders.

A comprehensive survey of Gupta art monuments with reference to the sites where they originated is indispensable for understanding the national character of the movement. The geographical factor played a dominant role in the distribution of the monuments, and the pulsating forces of commerce and religious propaganda determined their character and magnitude. We have seen how certain areas received a special share of the visible fruit of this aesthetic creativity. Owing to historical reasons the largest number of well preserved monuments is found in Madhya Pradesh at present, but at one time the cradle-land of Uttar Pradesh was enriched by temples and buildings in Gupta style on an extensive scale. Sarnath, Rajghat, Kosam, Bhita, Gadhwa, Sahet-Mahet, Bilsad (Farukhabad), Sankisa, Atranji Khera (Eta), Kudarkot (ancient Gavīdhumat in Etawah District), Bhitargaon, Ahichchhatra and Mathura—these and many other sites have produced valuable material of Gupta art in the form of temples, *stūpas* (*Fig. 119*), sculptures, architectural pieces, terracotta plaques and figurines, bricks, pottery, beads etc. These antiquarian objects may have been casually observed and even illustrated, but have not yet been made the subject of an overall study to demonstrate the extent and quality of the great art fostered in the Gupta period. In Uttar Pradesh, Mathura and Sarnath gave birth to two local styles of great vitality and beauty which exercised far-reaching influences on the art of the northwest and Central Asia and China through the overland route on the one hand, and on the art of Burma, Malaya and Indonesia on the other.

In the Punjab, Gupta relics have not yet been systematically surveyed. But it is important to mention the Jaina temple at Murti, near Choa Suidan Shah in the Salt Range which was visited by Sir Aurel Stein in the old town of Simhapura, of which the remaining antiquities are preserved in the Lahore Museum. The other sites include those of Pattan-Munara with its brick tower, of the Gupta period, Bhera (Shahpur District), Sangla-tiba, Shorkot, Sunet (Ludhiana District), Sugh (Ambala District), Theh Polar (near Kaithlal), Amin (Karnal District), Agroha (Hissar District), and Khokra Kot (Rohtak District). The time is now ripe for an intensive search which is likely to make a substantial addition to our knowledge. This survey ought to be extended to Gujrat, Saurashtra, Bombay, Berar, Hyderabad, Andhra, Tamiland, Mysore and Malabar on the mainland of India, and to Ceylon and the islands of Greater India, which received in full measure strong influences of Indian art as it flourished

in the Gupta age. As literary and religious heritage was transported across the seas so also vital styles of art and architecture were borrowed by the colonies from the Indian homeland.

The ideal of Gupta cul ure was harmony and synthesis. The householder's path of sensuous life and that of the recluse in rising above the senses to obtain a consciousness of the Divine were both honoured and the same found expression on the formula *bhukti-mukti-prada*, i.e., a way of life that is "true to the kindred points of heaven and home". Active participation in the affairs of the world and a release from their tension to acquire the serene repose of higher bliss, both were cultivated with an equal zest in the different stages of life. This attitude so widely reflected in literature and religion exercised a very wholesome effect in the realm of art. On the one hand it invokes beauty with all its perfection of physical form and ornamental and decorative make-up, and on the other part pays full homage to the ideal of spiritual realisation as seen in the figures of Śiva, Vishṇu, Buddha (*Fig. 120*), Bodhisattva, etc. All are representatives of the invisible divine principle which confers infinite richness, peace and bliss on human beings and is the only essential reality worth striving for to escape from the ups and downs of life. There is no doubt a perpetual session of beauty portrayed in the art of Gupta inspiration, but all that is dedicated to the spiritual ideal which is everywhere dominant. Art, dance, drama, music, literature—all are aspects of the goddess Sarasvatī, and should be designed to lift the mind to higher planes of consciousness where the individual merges itself into the pure realm of the Universal. This divine symbol is cast in the concrete form of the Gupta image enshrined in temples, which was the eternal light approached within the interior of the *garbhagṛihas* or the human hearts. Serenity, repose, calmness, joy, unruffled fixity of the mind, control over the objects of senses, perfect knowledge, compassion, discrimination and wisdom—these are some of the great principles of life and character which the divine images make manifest in the abiding charm of their visages which once seen can never be forgotten. Hundreds of such images and paintings are extant to proclaim firstly the aesthetic perfection and secondly the attainment of the highest spiritual vision for which art was dedicated.

The depth and purpose of Gupta art can be perceived in the religious and philosophical literature of the age, specially the Purāṇas, Pañcharātra Samhitās, Śaiva Āgamas, Sanskrit-Buddhist texts and the Jaina Āgamic commentaries. That task remains to be done, viz., the correct understanding of the ideals and symbolism of Gupta art in the light of contemporaneous statement. Art was not a fleeting stimulation but a perfect dedication to the ideal of life in which best of human action and thought are in harmony.

32. ART EVIDENCE IN KALIDASA

The works of Kālidāsa provide a rich literary documentation of the art and iconography of the period in which the great poet flourished. This untapped evidence throws some clear light on the vital problem of his date. That the poet lived in the early Gupta period is now the majority view. Most likely the tradition of Kālidāsa being placed in the court of Vikramāditya to be identified with Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty rests on true foundation, although archaeological evidence for the same is still lacking and perhaps may never come. In the absence of the same, dating within the prescribed limits of a particular king's reign could not be warranted by positive evidence, still the intrinsic testimony of the poet's own works points eloquently and unmistakably to the Gupta period (4th-5th century) as the age when he lived.

A satisfactory solution to the chronological basis of the evidence furnished by the poet's works should be looked for in classifying the internal data under the following heads and then placing him at the point where all the lines of evidence may converge. The various approaches are : (I) literary forms and motifs ; (2) vocabulary, language and style ; (3) geographical and historical allusions ; (4) social life, economic conditions and political institutions ; (5) religious pantheon and Puranic myths as studied in the light of their growth from simple to eloborate forms ; and (6) art and iconography.

It should be definitely possible to arrive at some chronological basis for the date of Kālidāsa from the picture of cultural life known to him. The present essay is confined to the evidence of art as providing the following important landmarks in this enquiry.

1. *Elaborate Lotus-like Halo.*

The halo in the images of the Kushāṇa period (1st-3rd century) is quite plain marked only by an edge of scallops (Sanskrit *hastinakha*). This halo becomes elaborate in the Gupta period as seen in the famous Buddha images from Mathura and Sarnath. The essential element in the decoration of the Gupta halo is a lotus flower. Kālidāsa makes specific reference to this kind of halo styling it as *padmātapatra-chhāyā-maṇḍala* (*Raghuvaṁśa*, IV, 5). In comparing the halo of his ideal hero Raghu with a lotus parasol the poet imagines that invisible Lakṣhmī held a lotus-parasol on the head of the king, this cast a shadow, and the shadow was the halo itself resembling a lotus.[1] A lotus parasol reflects itself in the lotus holo.

The scheme of lotus decoration so far as the parasol is concerned was developed in the Kushāṇa period, an example of which is found in the big round *chhatra* in the Sarnath

[1] छायामंडललक्ष्येण तमदृश्या किल स्वयम् ।
पद्मा पद्मातपत्रेण भेजे साम्राज्यदीक्षितम् ।।

Museum once crowning the colossal Boddhisattva dated in the year 3 of Kanishka (*Fig. 3*).[1] The lotus also figures in the centre of the square fragmentary parasol of the Kushāṇa period belonging to the Maholi Bodhisattva dated in the year 92.[2] The change in the Gupta period consisted in the lotus design shifting from the parasol to the halo (*Fig. 120*).

The next reference to an elaborate halo occurs in the description of Pārvatī where the poet conceives of her beautiful form to be embellished with a radiating halo (*sphurat-prabhāmaṇḍala*). The term '*prabhāmaṇḍala*' has since the time of Kālidāsa all along been used for the halo. The radiating pencils of light forming the halo have been compared by the poet to the slender ribs of crystal (*udbhinna-ratna-śalākā*). This imagery rests on a real feature in the decoration of the halo as illustrated in the orb of some images, e.g. the standing Buddha image from Mathura dated in Gupta era 230 (549-50 A. D.) (B. 10[3] Lucknow Museum) and also a Tīrthaṅkara image from Kankali Tila (J. 117,[4] Lucknow Museum). It is undoubted that the decorative elements of these Gupta halos were derived from parasols in actual use at that time. The halo on the Buddha image No. A.5[5] from Mathura occupied by a full-blown lotus at the centre shows in concentric bands the designs of a rope, small rosettes (*phullāvalī*), foliated scroll consisting of peacock design, a coiled garland, a border of beads, and lastly an edge of simple scallops. The peacock design and the pearl beading are actually referred to in the *Bṛihatsaṁhitā* of Varāhmihira as motifs decorating a royal *chhattra*. Bāṇabhaṭṭa also refers to this decoration as the female peacock in the midst of a lotus pond (*padmavana-śikhaṇḍinī*).

2. *Conch and Lotus :*

Kālidāsa refers to conch and lotus as decorating the door-jambs of houses. The Yaksha in the *Meghadūta* points out to the cloud that the cognizance of his house was the painted figures of *śaṅkha* and *padma* on the two sides of the entrance.[6] This motif is typically a feature of Gupta art as seen in the Devagarh temple where figures of conch and lotus with scroll work rising from them are carved on the jambs framing the three exterior wall-panels (*rathi-kābimba*) depicting Gajendramoksha, Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu (*Fig. 113*), and Nara-Nārāyaṇa.[7] In several pillars from Mathura of the same period these decorative symbols are carved with beautiful rising scroll (*patralatā*). In no specimen of Kushāṇa art have *śaṅkha* and *padma* as regular features of entrance decoration been found, although as individual motifs without

[1] D. R. Sahni, *Catalogue of the Archaeological Exhibitis in the Sarnath Museum*, 1910, p. 34, pl. VIII.

[2] V. S. Agrawala, New Sculptures from Mathura, *Journal of the U.P. Historical Society*, Vol. XI. Pt. II (Dec., 38), p. 72, pl. II ; also *Journal of the India Society of Oriental Art*, 1937.

[3] J. Ph. Vogel, *La Sculpture de Mathura*, pl. XXXI, fig. 1.

[4] V. A. Smith, *The Jain Stupa and Other Antiquities of Mathura*, Allahabad, 1901, pl. XCI.

[5] V. S. Agrawala, *Gupta Art* (1947), p. 17.

[6] *Dvāropānte likhitavapushau śaṅkha-padmau cha dṛishṭvā, Meghadūta*, II, 17.

[7] V. S. Agrawala, *Gupta Art* (1947), pl. XII-XIII.

the rising scroll both were known to early art. The poet here seems to be drawing upon a familiar motif of his time.

3. *Figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā.*

The reference to the goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā manifesting in human form and serving as attendants of 'Deva' (god Śiva) with flywhisks in hand (*mūrte cha Gaṅgā-Yamune tadānīṁ sachāmare Devamasevishātām, Kumārasambhava,* VII, 42) reflects greater chronological precision. This was the most typical decoratian on the door-jambs of the Gupta temple. No specimen of early or late Kushāṇa art has so far been found portraying this feature. Indeed, with the emergence of the flat-roofed small shrines in the early Gupta period (4th century A.D.), the frame work of the entrance to the temple received special attention and various elements of decoration were introduced to impart beauty, grace and life to the architectural portion leading to the place of the deity in the shrine. No doubt the various elements of decoration of the doorways of Gupta temples, namely, the projecting image in the centre of the lintel (*dvāralalāṭa-bimba*), attendant figures (*pratīhārī*) occuping the lower one-fourth portion of the jamb, auspicious birds on wing (*maṅgalya-vihaga*), usually flying geese, auspicious tree (*Śrīvṛiksha*), stylised *svastika*, Full-Vase (*pūrṇakalaśa*), amorous couples (*mithunas*), foliated scrolls (*patralatā*), rosettes (*phullāvallī*), dwarfish figures (*pramathas*), and last but not the least figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā standing on their vehicles, have invested these architectural specimens with exquisite richness and delightful form, seldom equalled by anything else in Indian art. The existing specimens of temple doorways at Devagarh in Jhansi (Fig. 11), Tigowa (Jubalpur district), Bhumra (Nagod State), Nachnā Kuthārā (Ajaigarh State), Khoh (Nagod State), Dah-Parbatia (Darrang district, Assam,) furnish these details in varying degrees, but the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā are conspicuously shown on most of them. Indeed, this motif became an established feature of temple decoration throughout the later temple arhitecture. We have definite proof that the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā had begun to be carved in the reign of Chandragupta II (375-413 A.D.), as in the Udaigiri cave depicting a colossal figure of Mahāvarāha in the act of lifting the earth, we find two flanking scenes showing the descent of Gaṅgā and Yamunā[1] on earth to the accompaniment of celestial music and universal rejoicing. The rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā, the two arteries of Madhyadeśa, seem to have become the symbols *par excellence* of the homeland of the rising powers of the Guptas.

4. *Vishṇu's Attributes in Dwarfish Human Form.*

An important reference in the *Raghuvaṁśa* may be considered of capital value for our enquiry, as the truth of its picture entirely depends on contemporaneous iconography, although its exact significance remained obscure. The poet imagines that when Vishṇu's germ had entered the womb of the queens (Kauśalyā and others), the usual attributes of Vishṇu transforming themselves into dwarf human figures posted guard on the deity in the

[1] V. S. Agrawala, *Gupta Art* (1947), figs. 6 and 7.

embryo. Each of them was distinguished by his respective symbol, namely,lotus, sword, mace, bow and disc.[1] This picture is based on three facts verifiable only in the Gupta period, viz. (1) that the attributes were onceived in human form., i.e., the *āyudhas* had become *āyudha-purushas ;* (2) that as attendants they were of dwarfish size (*vāmana*) ; and (3) that in addition to the human form (*purusha-vigraha*), each was marked (*lāñchhita*) by its respective real form (*mūrti*). The first feature is referred to in a more explicit manner in the same canto of the *Raghuvaṁśa*, speaking of Vishṇu as being received with acclamations of victory by his *attributes in living form.*[2] All these three features appear for the first time in the images of Vishṇu of the Gupta period, more particularly the images from Mathura illustrate these features in a distinct manner. Vishṇu images of the Kushāṇa period at Mathura show the *āyudhas* in their natural form. In the Gupta images the attributes specially the *gadā* and *chakra* began to be represented in human form, carved as dwarfs on the two sides of Vishṇu and at the same time marked by the natural figures of mace and disc. Vishṇu figures, Nos. Kt 191, B28 and 2419 (a terracotta panel showing a seated figure of Narasiṁha-Varāha Vishṇu), are typical specimens in the Mathura Museum illustrating these features, the first image being carved on a lintel which formed part of a Vishṇu temple at the site of Katra Keshavadeva built in the early Gupta period, probably during the reign of Chandragupta Vikramāditya whose inscription was found at the same site.[3] Kālidāsa had carefully observed these distinguishing features of Vishṇu iconography as developed in the Gupta period. It was not a mere convention, but definite iconographic data which supplied the poet with his material for the picture presented in the above verse.

5. *Other Iconographic Form.*

The history of Brahmanical iconography based on the evidence of art shows distinct stages of evolution from the Kushāṇa to the Gupta and from the Gupta to the medieval period. The available evidence shows that images of Brahmā, Śiva, both in human and *liṅga* form, Vishṇu, with four arms, Sūrya in "Northern dress" (*udīchyavesha*) wearing coats, trousers and boots, Indra, Kāmadeva, Kubera, Kārttikeya standing and holding spear, Lakshmī, Durgā, Saptamatṛikā and Mahishāsuramardinī had made their appearance in the Kushāṇa art of Mathura. The pantheon developed further in the Gupta period and also the various forms of each deity became more elaborate, e.g. Vishṇu sleeping on Śesha, Mahā-Vishṇu with the faces of Narasiṁha and Varāha added near the shoulders, Vāmana, Trivikrama, Rāma and Kṛishṇa incarnations of Vishṇu, Śiva in his various exploits; Kārttikeya riding on peacock, these are the forms for the first time seen in the Gupta art. A reference to these forms in

[1] *Guptaṁ dadṛiśur-ātamānaṁ sarvāḥ svapneshu vāmanaiḥ ; jalajāsi-gadāśārṅga-chakra-lāñchhita mūrtibhiḥ, Raghu.* X. 60.

[2] *hetibhiḥ chetanāvadbhiḥ, Raghu.*, X 12.

[3] J. Fleet, *Corpus of Gupta Inscriptions*, No. 4, p. 26.

the works of Kālidāsa does appear to have some chronological bearing, as for example, the description of Vishṇu seated on a serpent's seat (*bhogibhogāsanāsīnaḥ*) with Lakshmī shampooing his extended foot is a definite iconographic form (*Raghu.*, X. 7, 8). The mention here is of Vishṇu not *sleeping* on the serpent but *seated* (*āsīna*) on the coiled body (*bhoga*) of a snake (*bhoin*). The reclining form of Vishṇu is pictured in *Raghu.*, XIII. 6. In the Devagarh temple both the reclining and seated forms are present together. In the lintel of the main doorway the projecting figure[1] is that of four-armed Vishṇu *seated* on snake coils with the hoods forming a radiate halo at the back (cf. Kālidāsa, 'whose body was made effulgent by the gems fixed in the canopying hoods').[2] The right extended leg of Vishṇu is held in the hands of the seated figure of Lakshmī (*Fig. 12*). Thus the forms presented in art and the literary description are in complete accord. The form of Vishṇu lying on Śesha with Lakshmī shampooing the foot is found on the panel of an exterior niche in the same temple. The first form, however, seems to have been limited to the Gupta period, whereas the reclining form continues throughout in Indian art.

In *Raghuvaṁśa* VI. 4, Kārttikeya is mentioned as seated on the back of a peacock (*mayūra-pṛishṭhāśrayiṇā Guhena*). An inscribed image of Kārttikeya recently found at Mathura and the only one known from the Kushāṇa period shows the deity in standing pose holding a spear but without the peacock. The Gupta images on the other hand mark him out as riding on peacock.[3]

Kālidāsa's reference to the goddess Kālī wearing skull ornament (*kapālābharaṇa*, *Kumār.*, VII. 39; *Raghā.*, XI. 15) is a later iconographic feature which cannot be reconciled with anything known in Śuṅga or Kushāṇa art and thus provides a strong argument against a date prior to the Gupta period. The Seven Divine Mothers (*Saptamātaraḥ*, *Kumār.*), VII. 30, 38) were also unknown in the Śuṅga period. Their earliest origin lies in Kushāṇa art and they take a pronounced place in the iconographic list of the Gupta period. The reference in *Kumārasambhava*, XIV. 2-12 (although this portion of the book does not enjoy unchallenged authority) mentioning Kārttikeya with *śakti*, Indra on elephant, Agni on ram, Yama on buffalo holding *daṇḍa*, Nairṛita on corpse (*preta*), Varuṇa on *makara*, Vāyu on deer, Kubera *naravāhana* holding *gadā*, and Rudra riding on *mahāvṛisha*, is only an amplification of the Brahmanical gods represented in Gupta temples, e.g. the Gupta sculptures of several of these deities from Bhumara in the Allahabad Museum. They agree with the list of the guardian deities of the eight quarters recorded in the Amarakosha (1, 3, 2-3).

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[1] V. S. Agrawala, *Gupta Art* (1947), fig. 25.

[2] *Tat-phaṇā-maṇḍalodarchi-maṇi-dyotita-vigraham*, *Raghu.* X. 7.

[3] V. S. Agrawala, *A Handbook of the Sculptures in the Museum of Archaeology Mathura* (1939), Fig. 40. A prominent example of this type of Gupta Kārttikeya is now in the Bharta Kala Bhavan, Banaras.

Another reference characteristic of Gupta iconography relates to the lifting of Kailāsa by Rāvaṇa, the ridges rendered loose by the upheaval.[1] The scene is found depicted for the first time in Mathura art, Museum No. 2577.[2]

6. *Pearl Necklace with Central Sapphire Bead.*

A typical neck ornament of the Gupta period consisted of a necklace with a single string of pearls variegated by a central larger and elongated bead of sapphire. Its most graphic illustrations are found in the Ajanta paintings in both male and female figures. The great Avalokiteśvara painted in Cave I illustrates the single pearl string with a blue sapphire woven in the centre (*Fig. 121*). Kālidāsa refers to this ornament as *muktāvalī* (*Raghu.*, XIII, 48) or *muktāguṇa* (*Meghadūta*, I, 46). In the latter place mention is made of the big sapphire bead in the centre (*sthūla-madhyendranīla*). A cloud hanging low to drink the waters of the Charmaṇavatī is compared to a bead of sapphire decorating a single stringed pearl necklace. This ornament seems to have enjoyed a universal vogue, as not only paintaings but sculpture and terracotta figurines also show it to be in fashion. The poet himself remarks in another place : 'Remarkable is the beauty of the pearl itself, nothing to say when combined with the radiant sapphire'.[3] The same comparison of the pearl necklace (*muktāmayī yashṭi*) with sapphire is found in the description of Gaṅgā and Yamunā (*Raghu.*, XIII, 54). The poet saturated with the lore of contemporary life gives expression to its cultural details in delightful fine touches. In the seventh century this ornament had attained the climax of popularity under the name of *ekāvalī* to which Bāṇa frequently refers.

7. *A Painted Terracotta and Painted Sculptures.*

Kālidāsa has only one occasion to refer to a terracotta figurine where he does not fail to observe that the clay peacock of the Ṛishi child Mārkaṇḍeya was painted with colour (*varṇchitritamṛittikāmayūra, Śakuntalā*, VII). Although terracotta figurines were known as early as the Śuṅga period it is only the Gupta terracottas which reveal the use of brush by skilful painters. Unfortunately a limited number only preserve the traces of this once common decoration. Gupta terracottas of this kind were found in 1911-12 at Bhītā about which Sir John Marshall wrote : "Side by side were produced in Gupta times, figurines of a far more finished style, which reflects in minor measure the artistic spirit of the paintings and sculptures of that epoch. Some of the figurines are without a slip or paint ; others are painted in a monochrome—red or yellow, for instance, and others are coated with a slip and adorned with a variety of colours—red and pink and yellow and white".[4] More recently a few of the numerous clay figurines found at Rajghat show colour and line paintings on them. The *sārī* of a female

[1] *Kailāsasya daśamukhabhujochchhvāsitaprasthasandheḥ ; Meghadūta*, 1, 58.

[2] V. S. Agrawala, Brahmanical Images in Mathura, *J.I.S.O.A.*, 1937, p. 127, pl. XV (fig. 1.).

[3] *Prāgeva muktā nayanābhirāmā prāpyendranīlaṁ kimutonmayūkham, Raghu.*, XVI, 69.

[4] *Annual Report, A.S.I* 1911-12, p. 12.

figure is painted in wavy bands of red and white and the breast band (*kuchapaṭṭikā*) is indicated in black. On the figure of a small boy the short drawers are marked by vertical bands in alternating colours. On some female heads the painter has indicated in fine black lines the ornaments on the body. In others the eyebrows and the eyelids are marked in clear black colour.[1] Painted female heads with rich varieties of hair dressing and colours were also unearthed at Shāhgirda near Begram. Indeed, during the Gupta times paints were used to finish off the exterior surface of not only clay figurines and stuccos but also sculptures as seen in the stone images of the Ajanta Caves. In another place (*Raghu.*, XVI, 17) Kālidāsa refers to the female figures carved on pillars which had become dull on account of losing their colours.

8. *Styles of Hair.*

Numerous references to the *alaka* style of hair occur in the works of Kālidāsa and Bāṇabhaṭṭa. According to the *Amarakosha*, a document of the Gupta period, the *alaka* style of coiffure consisted in arranging the hair in curls (*chūrṇakuntala*). But even a more explicit explanation is offered by Kālidāsa himself in describing the hair of Indumatī that her *alakas* were frizzled or twisted in small spirals (*valībhṛit*, *Raghu.*, VIII. 53). The female toilet experts (*prasādhikā* women) employed scented paste in order to secure the effect of spiral twisting. In the description of Yakshiṇī living in separation from her husband, the poet styled her hair as *lambālaka* (*Meghadūta*, II), i.e. long hair loosely falling on shoulders, since the devoted wife had denied to herself the luxury of toilet, and her Spartan bath (*sudhā-snāna*) had made the *alaka* hair rough (*Parusha*) for want of oil, thus letting it fall on the cheeks (*Meghadūta*, II, 28). The *alaka* hair style is vividly illustrated in the portraiture of male and female heads in Gupta terracottas, sculpture, and painting, being the typical style of popular coiffure in that period (*Figs. 122-4*). Beyond India the style found its devotees in the fashionable society of Sassanian Iran and Imperial Rome. As negative evidence it may be stated that in none of the art specimens of the Kushāṇa period has the *alaka* style of spiral locks been so far seen. The spiral locks of hair when well-dressed and arranged in parallel tiers framed the face in charming manner as is evident from some of the terracotta female heads from Rajghat and Ahichchhatra exposed during recent excavations. The style seems to have been considered a distinct contribution to female beauty. (*Figs. 122-25*)

Another equally charming and gorgeous, but less common, manner of hair-dressing, probably employed by high-placed ladies only, was the one referred to as the peacock-feather style (*barhabhāra-keśa, Meghadūta*, II, 48). That this was a recognized style of coiffure is made certain by a couple of references in the Daśa-kumāra-charita of Daṇḍin, viz. (i) arranging the hair in the style of the feathers of a dancing peacock[2], and (2) the masses of hair arranged in imitation of peacock feathers[3]. Both Kālidāsa and Daṇḍin have used the term *barha* (peacock

[1] V. S. Agrawala, Rajghat Terracottas, *J.U.P.H.S.*, XIV, Pt. 1, (July 1941). p. 6.

[2] *Daśakumāracharita*, Nirnayasagar Press Edition. *līlā-mayūra-barthabhaṅgya kaśapāśaṁ cha vidhāya*, p. 46.

[3] Ibid, *barhi-barhāvalīm viḍambayatā keśakalāpena*, p. 58.

Fig. 128 Gupta Females

Fig. 121 Pearl Necklace

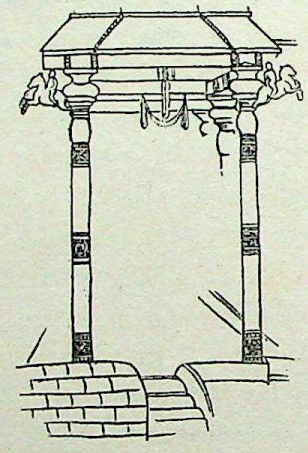

Fig. 127 Four-pillared Maṇḍapa

Fig. 126 Scarf with Haṁsa pattern

Fig. 122 Chhatrākāra

Fig. 123 Honeycomb

Fig. 124 Bhramaraka

Fig. 125 Sīmanta

feather) for naming this coiffure. The arrangement as seen on a few female terracotta heads[1] consists in the hair spreading from the central parting (*sīmanta*) in horizontal sweeps on both sides and ending in volutes (*Fig. 125*). No doubt the style imparts a princely dignity to the face and the highly aristocratic effect produced by it must have been very much coveted. This coiffure is conspicuous by its absence in Kushāṇa art.

The use of pearl festoons is a common ornamentation in the male and female headdresses of the Gupta period. The paintings of Ajanta bear ample testimony to the superior decorative effect produced by the use of hanging pearl strings in the hair and the crown. Nowhere has this been observed in Kushāṇa art and festooning of hair with pearl strings may safely be considered to be a Gupta novelty in fashion. Kālidāsa must have observed this and had referred to it freely in his works. The city of Alakā carrying on her head dripping clouds is compared to a heroine whose hair are beautified with pearl festoons (*muktājāla-grathitamalakam, Meghadūta*, I 63); compare also the reference to *jālaka-mauktika* woven in the *alakas*, (*Raghu.* IX, 44).

9. *Scarf with Geese Pattern* (*haṁsa-dukūla*).

The geese seem to have been a favourite pattern in the Gupta period. Cloth with haṁsa design painted or printed on it occurs in the Ajanta painting (*Fig. 126*). Kālidāsa refers to scarf with *haṁsa* pattern (*haṁsa-chihna-dukūla, Raghu.*, XVII, 25, and *kalahaṁsa-lakshaṇa dukūla, Kumār.*, V. 67). The use of this beautiful design must have continued for many centuries afterwards. We find mention of it in the *Kādambarī* of Bāṇa in the seventh century. Later, the *haṁsa* pattern occurs on Indian textiles of about the tenth century discovered at Fostat in Egypt which were taken from India by the Arab traders and were probably of Gujarat manufacture[2].

The flying geese pattern with bits of lotus stalk held in the beak was a favourite motif of Gupta art being present in Ajanta paintings, sculpture and in the beautiful ivory plaques from Begrām. Kālidāsa has immortalised this motif in one of the most beautiful verses of Sanskrit literature describing the magnificent phenomenon of the clouds gathering and thundering in the sky to which the earth responds by horripilating in the from of growing mushrooms a sign which gives the haṁsas a recollecting thought of the Mānasa lake and makes them start on their aerial journey, clutching little bits of lotus in their beaks to sustain them on the way[3].

10. *Small Four-Pillared Pavilion.*

It seems that the style of erecting small pavilions supported on four slender pillars with a modest seat under the canopy was a characteristic feature of Gupta art. Kālidāsa men-

[1] V. S. Agrawala, Rajghat Terracotta, *J. U. P. H. S.*, XIV, Pt. I (July 1941) figs. 1, 4.

[2] R. Pfister, *Les Toiles Imprimees De Fostat Et l' Hindustan* (Paris, 1938).

[3] *bisa-kisalaya-chchheda-pātheyavantaḥ rājahaṁsāḥ, Meghadūta* I, II.

tions it as *chatuḥstambha-pratishṭhita vitāna*, *Raghu*. XVII, 9). Bāṇabhaṭṭa is more explicit in his description of such a pavilion (*vitāna*), moderate in size (*nātimahataḥ*) and supported on four slender posts (*maṇidaṇḍika-chatushṭaya*), from the roof of which festoons of big pearls were pendant[1]. The true nature of the structure can be understood by looking at its painting in the Ajanta Caves[2] (*Fig. 127*). Such a *vitāna* constituted the *āsthānamaṇḍapa* or a pavilion to contain the royal seat of private and public audience.

11. *Webbed Fingers.*

The webbed fingers of hands and feet were considered an auspicious mark on the body of a great man (*Mahāpurusha-lakshaṇa*) and are often mentioned in relation to the physical body of the Buddha both in the *Lalitavistara* and other Buddhist works. Kālidāsa also refers to this feature in connection with the hand of the princely child Bharata who was recognised by Duḥshyanta as of royal birth from this sign observed in his hand extended to hold the toy peacock (*jāla-grathitāṅguliḥ*, *Śākuntala* VII). As this cannot be called exclusively a Gupta feature, its chronological value is lessened. Aśvaghosha also refers to it in the *Buddha-charita*.

12. *A characterstic Feature of Female Beauty.*

Innumerable specimens of Gupta female terracottas and sculptures point to one characterstic feature of womanly beauty, viz., full breasts pressing against each other without any intervening space between them (*Fig. 128*). Kālidāsa refers to this feature in describing the beauty of Pārvatī's youthful body, saying that not even a filament of lotus would separate the two breasts, so closely they were pressing against each other[3]. This must have been a convention of beauty accepted in the Gupta period for representing female figures in art. Nowhere do we find this feature in the portraiture of women figures in Kushāṇa art.

13. *Some Literary Motifs.*

As in art so in literature Kālidāsa holds up a mirror to motifs and ideals of the Golden Age in which he lived. Some important literary motifs so well known in Buddhist Sanskrit literature have their counterparts in the poetry of Kālidāsa. We know that the great moral virtues of the Buddha were receiving meritorious praise in the literature of the Gupta period. Of the several perfections of virtue known as the *Pāramitās*, the one depicting the perfection of Buddha's compassion towards all creatures (*Karuṇā-pāramitā*) was a theme for which the Buddhist story-tellers expressed their highest admiration. In the collection of the Jātaka tales specially compiled in Sanskrit by Āryaśūra during the early Gupta times, the opening Jātaka deals with the theme of Buddha's infinite mercy in giving his own body to relieve the pangs of a hungry tigress. The obvious moral of the tale was that the Buddha was indeed a

[1] *Kādambarī*, P. L. Vaidya, p. 9; cf. also *chatuḥ stambhamaṇḍapikā*, p. 127.

[2] V. S. Agrawala, *Gupta Art* (1947), p. 24 fig. 26.

[3] *anyonyam utpiḍayad-utpalākshyāḥ stanadvayam*, *Kumār.*, I, 40.

Great Being, whose magnanimity of heart counted no sacrifice too great to relieve the suffering of men and animals. The *Vyāghrī Jātaka* has its counterpart in the story of King Dilīpa who offers his body to a hungry lion in order to save his preceptor's cow. The poetic excellence and the warmth with which the story is realted are in no way less effective than the Tale of the Tigress. Indeed Kālidāsa has resurrected Dilīpa in the Gallery of ideal heroes.

The theme of Buddha's temptation and his victory over Māra is the subject of a beautiful poem in the *Buddhacharita* of Aśvaghosha. From the repertoire of Hindu legends Kālidāsa has selected a similar incident relating to Śiva, the king of Yogīs, who when made the target of his arrows by the god of Love reduced him to ashes. Buddha's Māravijaya and the Madanadahana of Śiva are but two versions of a single religious and philosophical theme. The motif underlying both is identical.

A third motif is that of the Jewel and the Serpent Maiden. We read in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* (p. 264-65), how the daughter of the serpent-king Sagara who possessed a priceless jewel equal in value to the whole world, offered the same to the Bodhisattva named Prajñākūṭa, who accepted it. Corresponding to this is the story in the *Raghuvaṁsa* (canto XVI) in which Kumudvatī, the daughter of a Serpent-King got a priceless ornament which slipped from the body of king Kuśa, while the latter was bathing in the Sarayū, and that her father offered both the jewel and the maiden to the king.

Another extraordinary example of the identity of motifs in Kālidāsa and in Gupta literature is that of the Rain of Gold. In the story of King Raghu and Kautsa as related in the 5th canto of the *Raghuvaṃśa*, we find the motif of the Golden Rain handled with the utmost charm. The profusion of gold in the country evidenced even now through out the hoards of Gupta gold coins must have given the impression of a real Golden Age to its contemporaries, who it seems tried to explain the phenomenon of overflowing wealth in terms of heavenly gold being showered on earth. The same motif of *Suvarṇavarshā* occurs in the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 223-24) in the story of King Māndhātā, in whose palace there fell for one week an incessant shower of gold coins.

These resemblances serve as reliable guides to the solution of the problem of the date of Kālidāsa. The literary motifs combined with the evidence of art are of such a definite character as to justify the inference that Kālidāsa and the art and literature of the Gupta epoch have an intimate relationship and that they both should be viewed against an identical background.

33. THE GUPTA TEMPLE AT DEVAGARH

On the banks of the river Vetravatī which is held specially sacred in Bundelkhand and beautifies many a landscape of that inviting region, there stands an immortal monument of Gupta Art, the Daśāvatāra temple of Devagarh. It is like a perpetual tribute to the creative genius of Gupta sculptors who conceived nobly and with equal elegance gave plastic form to their ideas.

This temple is important in more ways than one. Architecturally it is a perfect example of a "house of god" as brought into existence by the religious needs of the Gupta people and combines many features worthy of attention. The style of its set-up was copied from contemporary *stūpas* like which the temple stands on a sufficiently raised terrace, square in section and approached by four axial steps on the four sides. The face of this plinth was adorned by a large number of sculptural panels suitably framed by short pilasters so that the visitor while going round the temple on the ground floor could be made acquainted with a number of mythological scenes appertaining to the Hindu religion. It was like the Buddhist temple to teach the Jātaka stories carved on their railing pillars.

On the plinth and in its centre was built the main shrine, a modest building with sanctum measuring 9′9″ square inside and the four walls 3′ 7″ thick. The roof is flat but supports at the top a towering *Śikhara* (*Fig. 129*). The flat roof is a well-known feature of Gupta architecture but the tower seems to indicate a somewhat later growth.

DOORWAY

The best preserved portion of the temple and from the aesthetic point of view carrying the highest appeal is its doorway facing west (height 11′ 2″, breadth 10′ 9″; the actual entrance measuring 6′ 11″×3′4½″). The two door jambs and the upper lintel reveal several remarkable features. The jambs are adorned with beautiful standing figures of male and female attendants (*Fig. 11*) (*pratihārī*). These figures with their gorgeous flowing hair and elegant drapery rank amongst some of the most exquisite creations of the Gupta workmen. The portions above the figures have beautiful bands of foliage pattern on artistically carved scroll works known as *patralatā* or *patrāvalī* in contemporaneous Sanskrit literature. Of the other features amorous couples (*dampatī*), dwarfish male figures (*pramathas*) and the Tree of Prosperity (*Śrī-Vṛiksha*) and bands of rosettes (*phullāvali*) are typical of Gupta architecture. The upper lintel has two special features to show: (1) in its centre it has a projecting image (*lalāṭabimba*) which seen for the first time in Gupta temples became a regular feature later on and continues in houses and temples up to our own times, and (2) the two ends of the lintel are adorned with the images of the river goddesses, *Gaṅgā* and *Yamunā* standing on their respective vehicles, the alligator and the tortoise. This was a specially attractive feature

which originated in the Gupta period and for many centuries afterwards was accepted as the best decorative and religious pattern of a temple doorway (*Fig. 11*). It is most remarkable that Kālidāsa with his unusual powers of observing contemporary art and life records the presence of the twin river goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā as being in attendance upon the diety (*Kumārasambhava*, VII, 42). The literary description truly supports the architeclural tradition.

RATHIKĀ-BIMBA

The three other walls of the shrine are decorated exteriorly each with a big sculptured panel held up in position by a beautifully carved framework of posts, lintel and a sil. The choice of scenes on these panels is strikingly original showing —

(1) *Gajendra-Moksha*, i.e., the god Vishṇu redeeming the lord of elephants from the clutches of a monster-size Nāga ; (*Fig. 130*)

(2) *Nara-Nārāyaṇa-tapaścharyā*, performance of austerities by the sage *Nara* and *Nārāyaṇa* in their Himalayan hermitage at Badarīnātha'.[1]

(3) *Anantaśāyī Vishṇu*, i.e., *Vishṇu* sleeping on the cosmic serpent Śesha[2] (*Fig. 12*).

The panels are extremely well-done and are exquisite specimens of Gupta sculpture. "The drawing of the figures is generally spirited, and, in the case of the sleeping *Vishṇu*, the attitude is not only easy, but graceful, and the expression dignified...The excellence of these Devagarh sculptures has struck every one who has seen them, and in execution, I would infer the comparatively early date of the temple".[3] It is noteworthy that the clutching figure in the elephant scene is that of a colossal serpent and not of an alligator (*grāha*) as required by later tradition. The framed and sculptured panels bear the significant name of *Rathikā-bimba*.

JAGATĪ-PĪṬHA

The terraced basement, *Jagatīpīṭha*, as mentioned above, was adorned by a row of carved panels. Only a couple of them have survived *in situ*, the rest loosened from their position were buried in *debris* or scattered in neighbouring jungle and the village. They have now been brought together under roof of the local archaeological godown. The panels are veritable documents of Indian iconographic history. They were in two sizes ; the bigger ones measure about 2′ 9″ in height and about 1′9″ in breadth and supported a freezelike course of smaller panels about 12″ high.

RĀMA STORY

The following bigger panels relate to the Rāma legend—

(1) Visit of Rāma-Lakshmaṇa-Sītā to the hermitage of sage Agastya who with his wife Lopāmudrā welcomes their honoured guests ;

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1 Smith, *History of Fine Art*, pl. XXXIV ; later identified correctly by Y. R. Gupte, *Annual Progress Report, Northern Circle, Hindu and Buddhist Monuments*, 1918.

2 Smith, *ibid.*, pl. XXXV.

3 Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey Report*, Vol. X, p. 110.

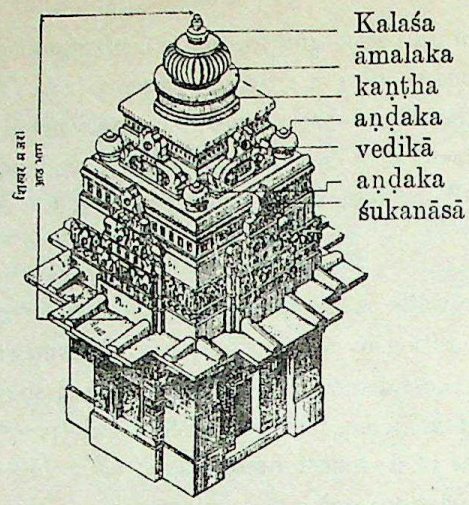

Fig. 129 Śikhara (reconstructed), Deogarh.

Fig. 131 Resurrection of Ahalyā

Fig. 130 Gajendra-moksha

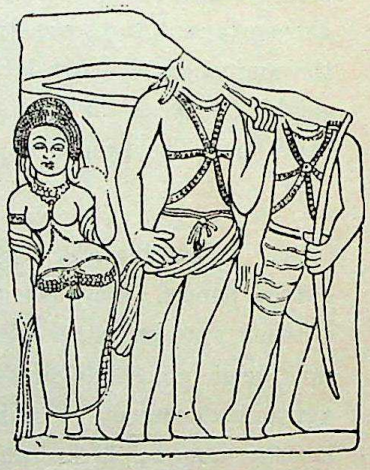

Fig. 133 Vana-gamana

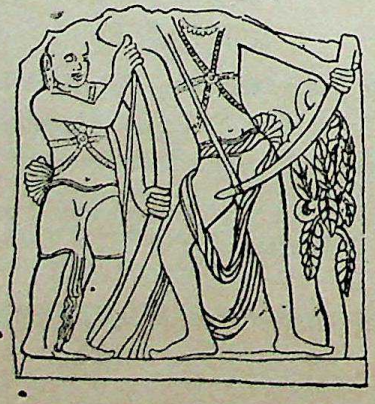

Fig. 132 Rāma & Lakshmaṇa practising archery

(2) Lakshmaṇa mutilating Sūrpaṇakhā in presence of his brother Rāma[1];

(3) Resurrection of Ahalyā by Rāma from the petrified condition (*Fig. 131*).

This clearly shows the presence of *Rāmāyaṇa* story in the Devagarh temple. Besides the few identified ones there were others left unidentified. Amongst such may be included the following :—

(1) Rāma and Lakshmaṇa practising archery. Rāma draws the bow and tries to shoot at a target. Behind him is Lakshmaṇa stringing the bow (*Fig. 132*).

(2) Rāma-Lakshmaṇa and Sītā on their way to the forest (*Fig. 133*).

(3) Rāvaṇa intimidating Sītā in the Aśoka garden.

Amongst the smaller panels are many miscellaneous scenes of secondary importance from the Rāmāyaṇa story, e.g.

(1) Rāma and Lakshmaṇa garlanding Sugrīva.

(2) Fight between Bāli and Sugrīva with Hanūmān as witness standing behind.

(3) Sugrīva being persuaded by his wife and Aṅgada to welcome Lakshmaṇa.

(4) Monkeys collecting stones for constructing the bridge across the ocean.

(5) Hanūmān carrying a mountain across the sky, most probably representing the scene of his bringing the Sañjīvanī herb from the Himalayas.

KṚISHṆA SCENCES

The definite connection of the Devagarh temple with the life story of Rāma is thus established beyond doubt. But what had never been suspected before is the association of this temple with the Kṛishṇa legend. For the first time it has now been revealed that the detailed cycle of Kṛishṇa's story was also depicted in the plinth of the Devagarh temple. The present image in the centre of the lintel in the doorway of the temple shows Vishṇu seated on the coiled body of a serpent. It indicates that the temple was dedicated to the god Vishṇu whose image must have been installed in the sanctum of the shrine. The presence of the Rāmāyaṇa panels confirms the Vaishṇava character of the temple. But the worship of Vishṇu in the Gupta period was popular both in the form of Rāma and Kṛishṇa. Kālidāsa while treating of the Rāmāyaṇa story in his *Raghuvaṁśa* does not fail to make repeated allusions to the Kṛishṇa cycle. In the *Meghadūta* he refers to the cowherd Kṛishṇa bedecked with the feathers of a peacock shining like clustered jewels.[2] In the Bhitari inscription of Skandagupta we find a pointed reference to Kṛishṇa waiting upon his mother Devakī after he had made short work of his adversary Kaṁsa. It is now to be clearly understood on the basis of not only literary references but also of sculptures that the Kṛishṇa story had been perfected in very great detail in the early Gupta period (IVth—Vth Century A.D.). From

1 Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey Report*, Vol. X. p. 109.

2 *Barheṇeva sphurita-ruchinā gopa-veshasya Vishṇoḥ, Meghadūta*, 1-15.

amongst the panels at Devagarh the following scenes relating to the cycle of Kṛishṇa legend can be identified :—

(1) *Birth of Kṛishṇa*—Here Vasudeva and his wife Devakī are represented and the latter is handing over the new-born babe to her husband to be carried away in concealment to his friend's house at Gokula.

(2) *Nanda-Yaśodā* in their domestic retreat fondling Kṛishṇa and Balarāma. Obviously Yaśodā is holding Kṛishṇa and Nanda has Balarāma in his arms. In the background are the cows standing as well as seated.

A remarkable feature is the distinction made by the artist in the dress of Devakī and Yaśodā. In the first panel Devakī is dressed in a *Sārī* with an attractive coiffure of frizzled hair, whereas in the second panel Yaśodā is draped like a rustic woman wearing a head cover (*oḍhanī*) and shirts (*lahngā*).

(3) *Kṛishṇa kicking at the milk cart.* This is the unmistakable scene of Śakaṭalīlā which in fact supplies a clue to the Kṛishṇa story carved at Devagarh. The child Kṛishṇa is lying on his back and is shown kicking at the cart with his left foot. The three milk pitchers on it have toppled down. Yaśodā astonished at this childish feat stands by on the right.

(4) *Kṛishṇa and his friend Sudāmā.* Kṛishṇa in the centre is elegantly attired, wearing his hair in a gorgeous wig of flowing *alakāvalī*. On his left stands his Brahmin friend Sudāmā leaning on a crooked staff. On Kṛishṇa's right stands the lady Rukmiṇī expressing her discomfiture at the unbounded generosity of her husband.

These four panels almost complete in size portray four important scenes from the life of Kṛishṇa and offer welcome seculptural evidence indicating the extent of popularity of the Kṛishṇa story in the Gupta period. The panels are in the best style of Gupta art and may be assigned to the early Vth century A.D.

INSCRIPTION

A short inscription in Gupta Brāhmī characters on a big square pillar noticed for the first time by R. B. Daya Ram Sahni[1] reads as follows :—

Line (1)—Keśavapurasvāmipādāya Bhāgavata.

Line (2)—Govindasya dānam.

"The gift of Bhāgavata Govinda at the holy feet of the Lord of Keśavapura".

Two interesting questions arise out of these, viz., the identity of Bhāgavata Govinda and the identification of Keśavapurasvāmī. My suggestions in respect of these are as follows:—

Keśavapurasvāmī appears to be the name of the particular image which was installed at Mathura in the Brahmanical temple at the site of Katra Keshavadeva

[1] *Annual Progress Report, Northern circle*, 1918, p. 12.

which is known even to-day as the Keshavapura *muhalla* of Mathura city. From several architectural fragments and four-armed Vishṇu images found at this site it is certain that a temple of Vishṇu occupied this place in the Gupta period. Now, an inscription of Chandragupta II was found long ago by Cunningham from the site of Katra Keshavadeva. This inscription was intended to record, as inferred from the construction of the last broken sentence, some pious work done or some monument raised by Chandragupta[1].

As the architectural and sculptural finds point out this monument at Mathura was a temple dedicated to Vishṇu. It appears that the builder of the Vishṇu temple at Devagarh derived his inspiration from the original Vishṇu temple at Mathura and the presiding deity was given the same name as the deity at Mathura, viz., Keśavapurasvāmī.

As to the identity of Bhāgavata Govinda it may be suggested that he was a son of Chandragupta II and is the same as Bhāgavata Govinda of the Basarh Seal, and now of the newly discovered Gwalior inscription[2]. In all likelihood this Bhāgavata Govinda was the son of Chandragupta Vikramāditya from his wife Dhruvasvāminī and like his father he conceived the idea of building a Vishṇu temple similar to the temple at Mathura during the period of his rulership in Mālavā.

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1 Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, No. 4,p. 25, *Mahārājādhirāja śrī Samudraguptasya putreṇa tatparigrahītena mahādevyāṁ dattadevyāmutpannena paramabhāgavatena mahārājādhirāja śrī (Chandraguptena)*.

2 Being edited by Mr. M. B. Garde, Director of Archaeology, Gwalior State, in the *Epigraphia Indica*.

34. A NEW GUPTA TEMPLE AT DARRĀ IN MALWA

The small temple at Darrā in Kotah (Malwa) adds one more example to the moderate sized temples of early Gupta period. It stands on a raised plinth measuring 44′×74′ with stepped approaches from the left and right corners of the front side. The temple facing east stands nearer the western side of the plinth. The cella or sanctum (*garbhagṛiha*) consists of four square pillars, 5½ ft. apart from each other (*Fig. 134-5*). Each pillar is surmounted by a square capital with projections on the four sides carved with scroll work. Above the two projections on the same side is a lintel covered by a flat stone of moderate size carved with a big full-blown lotus in the centre showing two bands of petals and a band of floral scroll work. There are four similar but smaller lotuses in the four corners.

In the sanctum is placed a pedestal 4½ ft. square, with a square recess in which the slab or *yonipaṭṭa* for the *liṅga* seems to have been once inserted.

On each of the three sides of the sanctum two pilasters have been erected at a distance of 3′9″. The pillars are surmounted by capitals with three projections on which three lintels were placed, each covered by a rectangular flat stone carved with five lotuses on the inside.

On the front side two square pillars were erected in a line with the sanctum pillars at a distance of 5½ ft. These supported capitals and lintels were covered with a flat top stone, so that on all sides of the temple a continuous circumambulatory path was provided. Outside the *pradakshiṇāpatha* a stone course only 16″ high from the ground ran on three sides of the temple at a distance of 2′2″ from the pilasters.

At a distance of 18 ft. from the pillars towards the east side a *mukha-maṇḍapa* resting on four square pillars was once built, which probably served as a maṇḍapa for the Nandī bull. The pillars of this maṇḍapa were standing in situ until about three years back when the restoration work of the temple was undertaken. Due to some misunderstanding on the part of the P.W.D. Engineer, the old pillars were pulled down and were replaced by modern pillars. The *mukha-maṇḍapa* seems to have measured 8 ft. square from centre to centre of each pillar. Dr. A. S. Altekar who saw the temple with Dr. Mathura Lal Sharma of Kotah before the *Mukha-maṇḍapa* was demolished informs me that he read on one of the pillars the name *Gopavaraman* written in Gupta script.

On one of the two pillars of the front porch is written the name *Achintya-dhvaja Yogī* in characters of about the 11th—12th century A.D.

This temple stands inside the Darrā or the mountain pass connecting Malwā with North India, which is now called Mukandara and was a regular highway in the Gupta period

and later. The temple seems to belong to the early Gupta period as indicated by the following facts :—

1. Small size of the sanctum.
2. Flat-topped roof covered by a single slab.
3. Lotus decoration on the ceiling which is similar to the lotus on the parasol of the Gupta period Buddha images and also that of the Kushāṇa period Bodhisattvas.
4. The architectural feature of the square flat top of the sanctum is similar to the square parasol of the Bodhisattva images found at Maholi and Mathura, placed above freestanding images installed inside a small Gandhakuṭī improvised for the purpose. The design of the temple is extremely simple.

Fig. 134 Carved Toraṇa—Śiva Temple at Darra.

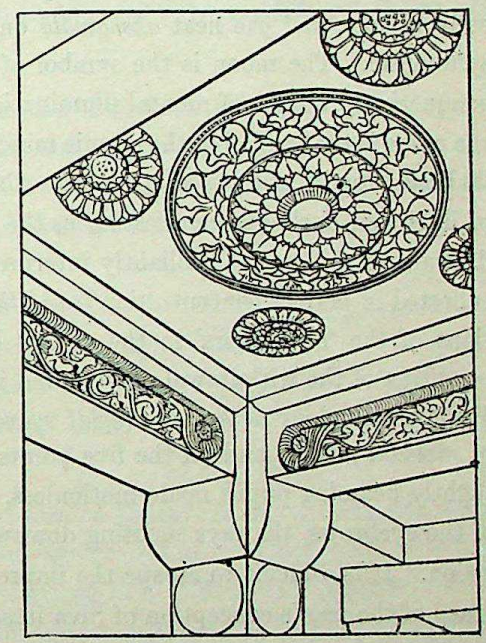

Fig. 135 Carved ceiling of Gupta Śiva Temple—Darra.

About 100 ft. to the west of the temple stands a Śiva-liṅgam, 2′8″ above the ground and 3′9″ in girth on a modern *chabutrā*. It is a plain *liṅgam* and seems to have originally belonged to the main temple, but removed to its present site after the temple had fallen.

Adjoining the *chabutrā* is a well of moderate size built with ashlar masonry and having steps on one side leading to the water.

The Darrā temple is worthy of being declared a protected monument. It would be better if measures for its complete restoration are undertaken, since majority of the carved architectural stones were either still standing in situ or lying on the terrace when I visited the temple on 13th February 1950.

35. SCULPTURES FROM NACHNA KUTHARA AND KHOH

The glory of Gupta art is fully exemplified in the Gupta Śiva-liṅga from Uchahara area. Śiva's face shows the perfect expression of *samādhi* as described by Kālidāsa in the *Kumārasambhava* (III. 44-50). The gorgeous matted locks in two tiers are charmingly depicted in an orderly fashion, with a girdling band in the middle and strands of descending locks on the two sides also arranged in a happy manner. The whole treatment is distinguished by a balance and well defined features, and the effect of eminence imparts dignity to the expression. It is the *unnaddha-jaṭā-kalāpa* of the poet, but without the ophidian ribbons which would only be scaring in such a serene countenance. The digit of the new moon above (*bālendu*) and the vertical eye in the forehead below (*kapāla-netra*) perfectly balance each other in a face aesthetically perfect, and the neat *akshamālā* on the neck serves as the fitting base of an ascending symbolism. The moon is the symbol of Soma, the ambrosial essence of life and the death-conquering principle of mental illumination or *samādhi*. According to the *Ṛigveda* (X. 90.13) the moon is the symbol of the cosmic mind of the Creator (*chandramā manaso jātaḥ*), representing its basic serenity and peaceful coolness which nothing can disturb, as also an orderly fluctuation of light and darkness manifesting as the brightness of creation and the invisibility of its withdrawal. Kālidāsa has brilliantly interpreted the moon symbol by speaking of Śiva's mind as collected in perfect concentration (*samādhi-vaśya manas*) and restrained from the sense attractions of the 'nine doors' in the citadel of the body (*nava-dvāra-nishiddha-vṛitti*). It is the condition of the withdrawal of the mind into its own unmanifest source or centre expressed in Vedic terminology as *hṛidaya* (*hṛidi vyavasthāpya*). The introvert gaze was a typical feature of *samādhi-mudrā*, and all the five points detailed by the poet are here represented, viz., the slightly beaming pupils made motionless, the eyelashes still, the vision directed to the centre of the eyebrows, the rays shooting downwards, and combined effect of it all being one of self-vision. It is difficult to escape the impression that the artist of this perfect image had a real grasp of the poet's conception of Śiva in *samādhi*. In the whole range of Indian sculpture this particular Śiva-liṅga is hard to be surpassed for the expression of spiritual contemplation or *samādhi* in its face. It is verily the flaming lamp of supreme wisdom, untrammelled by outer flickers—a *nishkampa pradīpa* in the words of Kālidāsa. It is only in the Gupta age that we find such perfection gracing the endeavour of the artist. He was no doubt a real genius who captured a vision of the truth in one of his rare moments. The image seems to have been carved in the last quarter of the 4th or the first quarter of the 5th century when Gupta art was at its best. The height from base to top of the liṅgam is 38″ and that of the head 10″.

It may also be noted that there are three Śiva-liṅgas from Khoh or from Uchahara area published so far. One is preserved in the Allahabad Museum and illustrated by S. C. Kala

on Pl. XXA, B, of his book *Sculptures in the Allahabad Municipal Museum*, and described: "N. 164 Ekamukha Śiva Liṅga (6″×18″) from Koh. Gupta Period. The lower part is roughly chiselled. Above it there is a plain cylinder which contains on one side the bust of Śiva". (P. 30). A second Śiva-liṅga similar in style to the above but with more elaborate ornamentation in the form of a broad torque round the neck, a *maṇimālā* near the line of hair on the forehead, and a *gavāksha-chūḍāmaṇi* ornament on the hair above, really belonged to the Bhumara Śiva temple and was published by R. D. Banerji in his Memoir, *The Temple of Śiva at Bhumara* (1924; Pl. XV c). This was reproduced by A. K. Coomaraswamy in his article entitled "Indian Sculpture" published in the special art number (dated April 27, 1929) of the magazine *The Art News* (New York), fig. 16. Somehow Coomaraswamy mentioned it as a find from Khoh, and in borrowing the figure from Coomaraswamy the same mistake was committed by me in my *Gupta Art* (1947; fig. 5, pp. 6 and 35). The third example is the present one, which is decidedly the best specimen amongst all such examples. It was found somewhere in the Uchahara area and at present is in the collection of Smt. Pupul Jayakar, in New Delhi (*Fig. 136*).

The iconographic form of the Ekamukhī and Pañchamukhī Śiva-liṅgas had been developed as early as the Kushāṇa period, but in the Gupta period the former became much more popular and was extensively installed by the Māheśvara teachers in the shrines established under their inspiration. In the five-faced form, the five faces correspond to the five elements as follows:

1. Sadyojātā—Earth (front face);
2. Vāmadeva—Water (next face to the proper right side);
3. Aghora (and Ghora)—Fire (the Terrific face on the proper left side);
4. Tatpurusha—Air (the face on the back side):
5. Īśāna—Sky (top face).

Śiva is conceived as *ashṭamūrti*, the Eight-formed Deity. It was a Vedic conception explaining the principle of manifestation through the eight-forms of Agni, also called the Eight Vasus, whose names are given in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (VI. 1. 3. 10-18, *tānyetāni ashṭau Agnirūpāṇi*). For the Purāṇa writers the theme of Agni manifesting as Rudra was a popular one, and they have elaborately described the eight forms of Śiva. Kālidāsa enumerates them in the first verse of the drama *Abhijñāna-Śākuntala*, and says that they are the 'eight visible forms' (*pratyaksha tanu*) of Śiva. The list includes the Five Elements, the Sun and Moon, and the *Yajamāna*. Although at first sight couched in sacredotal terminology, the whole conception is rational and clear; the Five Elements represent the gross body or the material form; the Sun and the Moon symbolize the Twin forms of energy or the Life Principle expressed as *prāṇa* and *apāna*; the *yajamāna* represents the mind as explained in the *Śatapatha* (*mano yajamānasya rūpam*, XII. 8. 2.4). Manifestation is thus a combination of Mind, Life and Matter, where Life results from the union of Matter with Mind:

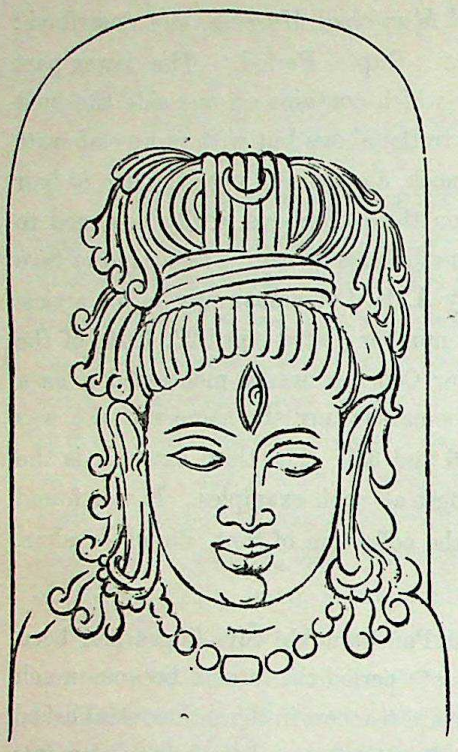

Fig. 136 Śiva-liṅga from Uchahara; early 5th century A.D.

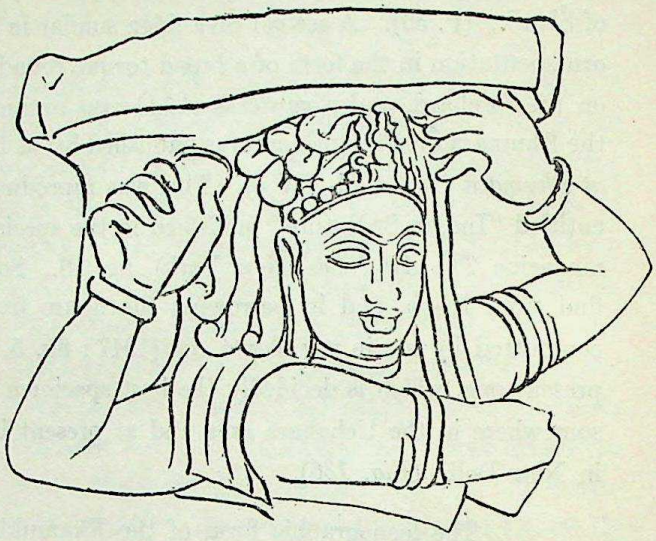

Fig. 139 Mahānaṭa Śiva in the Tāṇḍava dance

Fig. 138 Gaṇa

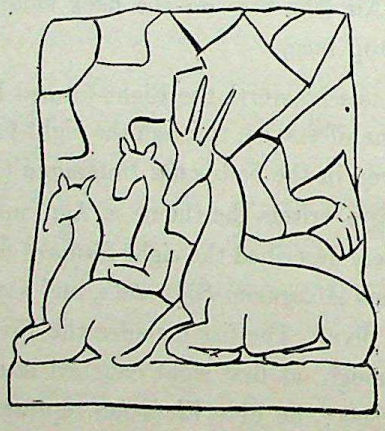

Fig. 140 Family of Deer Nachna Kuthara

Fig. 137 Male Figure

I. Matter—Five Elements (*pañcha-bhūta*);
II. Life—Sun-Moon (*prāṇa-apāna*);
III. Mind—Focal centre of manifestation, called the *yajamāna* of the *yajña*.

In the Pañchamukhī Śiva-liṅga, the symbolism of the Five Elements as the Five Face (*pañcha brahma*) is explicit. But the Ekamukhī form was a more subtle formula. Here the one face is taken to symbolise all the five senses or the Five Elements, all of which have their centres in the head as ears, eyes, nose, tongue and skin. The liṅga framing the head is explained in the *Liṅga Purāṇa* as the Invisible Reality called *avyakta* (*avyaktaṁ liṅgam uchyate*, III. 1), which embodies and symbolises both life (*prāṇa*) and mind (*mānasatattva*). The two rings in the ears, described by Kālidāsa as *karṇāvasakta akshasūtra* (*Kumārasambhava*, III. 46), and as shown in the present example, were also interpreted to signify the two *maṇḍalas*, viz., the transcendant and the immanent, the absolute and the relative, the *paramākāśa* and *daharākāśa*. The conception of Śiva offers a detailed formula of the creative principle or cosmogony as originally evolved in the Vedas and later elaborated in the Purāṇas. The images offer concrete iconographic solutions to the problem. The formless Liṅgam is the flaming Pillar of Fire that resides within each one of us as the *akshara* or Imperishable *Prāṇa*, and the human is the gross material form in which Life incarnates or manifests on the visible plane within the orbit of sense-experience.

The next sculpture (*Fig. 137*) is the head and bust of a male figure found in the jungle round Nachna Kuthara. Its height is 18". A typical Gupta feature is the pearl string (*ekāvalī*) round the neck and a big necklace pendant from the left shoulder reminiscent of the *śesha-hāra* described in the *Kādambarī* which became known as *ṭoḍara* in the medieval period. The figure is powerfully built and the head thrown up with a partial twist towards the right.

Fig. 138 represents a Pramatha or one of Śiva's *gaṇas*. Śiva is the lord of cosmic energy; as Fiery Rudra he is the supreme director and controller of all that lives and moves. He personifies the collective principle, the cosmic form which is one indivisible whole as the supreme divinity. But He manifests himself in creation as so many *gaṇas*. The One becomes the many, and this is creation. Each *gaṇa* symbolises the principle of individualisation and Śiva is the lord of all the *gaṇas*. A *gaṇa* is aptly designated as a Pramatha, a turbulent unit of energy, challenging and aggressive, possessing a destructive tendency, unless controlled by the master and in tune with his cosmic dance. The *gaṇas* are represented in the pose of frolicking young boys. They are the wonderful Boy Heroes submitting to the power of the Eternal Yogī or sage that is Śiva. In Śaiva temples a number of them were depicted in an endless variety of postures, as shown on pl. X of the Bhumara Memoir by R. D. Banerji. The playful *gaṇas* became a favourite motif of Gupta architecture, to which reference is made in the *Vāsavadattā* of Subandhu as *māṇavaka krīḍita* (Jivanand's ed., p. 53), as *bāla-krīḍā* in the

Kādambarī (Vaidya ed., p. 52), as *dharma-bālāpatya* in the *Avantisundarī* (p. 5), and as *śiśu* in the *Nalachampū*. In an age surcharged with the ideal of Kumāra, the depiction of those playful boys received added significance as a decorative motif in residential buildings and shrines. The present one is a fine vigorous example of this motif duly adorned with fluttering ringlets, writslets, armlets, a tiger's claw-pendant (*vyāghra-nakha*) and a waistband.

The next sculpture (*Fig. 139*) is reported to have come from Nachna Kuthara; its height is 13″ and breadth across the arms 18½″. It depicts Mahānaṭa Śiva in the Tāṇḍava dance, only the upper portion of the bust being now preserved. Fortunately what has remained, viz., the head and the arms, adequately illustrate the action of the cosmic dance undertaken by the deity. The expression on the face bespeaks great majesty and steadfast support to the titanic pulsations of the dance. The released energy is expressed through the upper two arms rhythmically thrown up and artistically framing the head, and also the pair of lower arms, one of which in puissant horizontal extension is partially preserved. The fourth arm and the legs must have been portrayed in a manner to convey adequately the power and rhythm inherent in the performance. The twist of the bust towards the proper left is a very significant feature marking both the direction of the force and the overall restraint exercised in its liberation. Dance is primarily the creation of rhythms, the balancing and equipoising of revolutionary tensions in one restrained harmony. This appears to be the earliest representation of the Tāṇḍava motif so far known in Indian art, and one may at once concede that the artist's effort has been crowned with complete success in the portrayal of the necessary elements of the theme, viz., cosmic power lashing into motion but wedded to eternal poise and rest. The ruffled matted locks, the *chintāmaṇi* jewel on the head, the *ananta-valaya* on the arms and the bangles on the wrists serve as happy items of decoration enhancing the general effect of the subject.

The last example (*Fig. 140*) showing a family of deer (height 16″, breadth 16″), originates from the older temple at Nachna Kuthara and was found near it. Most probably it was fixed in the outer surface of the wall of the verandah. In a hilly terrain a male deer with two does and a young one is majestically seated in a reposeful attitude. The group represents a fine treatment of animal sculpture in early Gupta art of about the beginning of the 5th century A.D.*

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* Figs. 137, 139 and 140 are also in the collection of Smt. Pupul Jayakar. Fig. 138 has been gifted by Smt. Jayakar to the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, Bombay.

36. A NOTE ON GUPTA ŚIVA LIṄGA AT MATHURA

The Museum at Mathura though rich in sculptures of the Kushāṇa period, still has some specimens of the Gupta age which are of excellent artistic merit. The famous standing Buddha of the 5th century A.D. is a well-known example as representing a quality of art unachieved by other less fortunate centres. It is proposed through this Note to introduce a group of Mukha-liṅgas of the Gupta period found at Mathura.

The temple in which the liṅgas are still found stands on a raised mound on the slopes of the Mahāvidyā Devī Temple from which locality many specimens of Kushāṇa and Gupta art were collected. A description of the temple and the Liṅgas is given below :—

The temple stands on a solid plinth 10′ square. The flat roof of the main shrine is supported on four columns each bearing two brackets which support four horizontal architraves. The height of the roof is 8′ from the floor. The main image faces to the East. It is not in a state of good preservation. It is an Ekamukhī Śiva Liṅgam, which is 2′-6″ above the floor. The Mukham is the chief object of interest and artistically an excellent specimen of the Gupta-Vākāṭaka period resembling the Śiva Liṅgas at Khoh, Bhumara and Nachana, etc. (*Fig. 141*) and displaying the characteristic serenity of Śiva's contemplative mood (*Samādhi*). It is remarkable that in an age when cultural life found its utmost expression, India instead of allowing herself to debase in a sensuous appreciation of beauty regained her self-consciousness and worshipped the ideal of eternal self-control as embodied in Śiva, who had subdued even the God of Love. On the forehead of Śiva is shown the third eye in a vertical position. The strands of the matted hair are shown in parallel flutes turning upwards and termnating in an Āmalaka shaped knot on which is shown the beautiful crescent. Round the neck there was a very rich necklace of several strings. The first string of this nacklace shows arranged round the central rectangular bead four big pearls, then one smaller plaque, and again five pearls on each side. The biggest pearl is of the size of an ordinary Āmalaka and the smallest of a plumbery. In all there are eighteen pearls (*muktas*) and three rectangular beads in the string. Below this is a precious necklace of metallic plaques whose number probably was seven. Its breadth in the centre is about 2″. This has two strings of smaller pearls attached to it one above and the other below. In the neck above the first string of the big pearls are shown the three lines of the Grīvā. On either side following from the root of the upper crest of the fluted locks are shown three loose locks falling parallel to each other and coming down to the base of the Liṅgam. The circumference at the upper end of the hair knot is 3′—4″, at the base 3′—6″, at the nose 4′—1″, at the third eye 4′—4″. Height of the locks including the top-knot is 11″. Distance from the floor to the roof of the locks above the third eye 1′—4½″.

The five liṅgas are arranged in two rows. In the first row there are three only, one of which is well preserved, the remaining two have completely decayed. The first one is a four-faced liṅgam (Ht. 2′2″, circumference above *Mekhalā* 2′8″) having near the top a *Mekhalā* consisting of two inter-twining cords whose inter-twined spaces alternate with circular plaques. Of the two Śiva liṅgams in the second row the more important one has been described above, the other is a plain shaft (Ht. 2′—3″, circumference 2′—11″, Ht. of the nut 1′—10″, Ht. of the shaft below the nut 8″) . In the middle of the nut is a *raśanā* consisting of three inter-twining cords, probably representing the Iḍā, Piṅgalā and Sushumṇā.

Between the two rows of the liṅgams is placed the Nandī, which also seems to be of the same age as the liṅgams. It is a well carved lively figure of a bull.

It may be added that in the principal shrine above the mound are found embedded in the wall two sculptures of the Gupta period, one a Brāhmanical Goddess of seducing features holding a bowl in both hands, and the other a typical standing Buddha with halo and folded drapery as found in specimens of this period.

Fig. 141

37. PANCHA-VAKTRA OR KĪRTIMUKHA

MOTIF

This word occurs in the following passages of the *Padma Purāṇa:*

(१) नत्वा यदेतल्लंकाद्वारे दृश्यते दारु पञ्चवक्त्रं शुक्रेणोक्तमेतेन च्छिन्नेन रावणो हन्यतेऽथ च दारुच्छेदन-समनन्तरं पाताले गन्तव्यमिति भार्गव भाषितं शासनं लिखितं तस्मात्त्वमिदं दार्वेक प्रयत्नेनैकवाणनिपातेन पञ्चधा छिन्धि ततस्तव शक्तिं ज्ञात्वा युद्ध मतिदृढं कुर्वहे ॥२०८

अथ भार्गववचो विज्ञाय रामः पूर्वकोट्यां स्पर्शमानेऽस्त्रेण सज्यंकृत्वा धनुषिवाणं संयोज्य रक्षोभ्यां हनुमता श्रावयन्नेव वाणं मुमोच ॥२०९

बाणं धनुषश्चलितं तौ राक्षसौ बाणमार्गे निरीक्षमाणौ दारुबाणेन पञ्चधा छिन्नं निरीक्ष्य रामं व्यज्ञापयतामावयोः शिशवो रक्षणीयास्त्वयेति ॥२१०

(२) गोपुरस्थं तथा दारु पञ्चवक्त्रमथेषुणा । चिच्छेद पञ्चधा तेन राम स्त्वां मारयिष्यनि ॥२३३

I. Atikāya and Mahākāya spying in Rāma's encampment were caught but treated kindly by him. They divulged this secret of Rāvaṇa's ruin : 'In the entrance gateway to Laṅkā is a beam carved with *Pañcha-vaktra* motif. Śukrāchārya has said that as soon as this beam is cut into pieces, Rāvaṇa will meet his death. Therefore, when this event takes place you should move to Pātāla to save yourself. This prophecy of Bhārgava Sūtra is engraved on a plate. Therefore, O Rāma, you cut that *Dāru* into five pieces by a single shot of your arrow. We shall thereby know your might and offer stiff resistance' (208).

When Rāma learnt it as Śukra's prophecy, he put an arrow on his bow and communicating (his intention) to the two demons through Hanumān let the arrow fly (209). The shaft so discharged from the bow split the wooden beam (*dāru*) into five pieces. The demons when they saw this prayed to Rāma to spare their family (210).

II. 'The wooden beam that forms part of the Gopura (in Laṅkā) and which is carved with the *Pañcha-vaktra* motif would be split into five pieces and thereby Rāma will cause your death',—thus spoke Vibhīshaṇa to Rāvaṇa (233).

(*Padma Purāṇa*, Pātāla-khaṇḍa, ch. 112)

It is clear from the above that there was a deep-seated superstitious belief in Laṅkā that the destruction of the *Pañcha-vaktra Dāru* which formed part of the chief entrance to the capital, would result in the death of Rāvaṇa, the ruler of the kingdom. The apparent meaning of *Pañchavaktra* is 'five-faced', but it was an architectural term meaning the decorative motif of a lion's face carved on the lintels of doorways or frienzes of buildings. A lion is called *pañchānana* or *pañchāsya* because of its wide gaping mouth (the word *pañcha* being

derived from *pachi vistāre, Rāmāśramī* commentary to the Amarakośa)[1]. The *Pañchavaktra* motif was the same as the *Kīrtimukha* motif of ancient Indian art. Originally the word *Kīrti* signified an excavated chaitya-hall, and then a temple or palace, and its earliest use in the sense is recorded in a copper-plate inscription from Kanheri dated A.D. 493 :

तावत्कीर्तिः स्थिरेयं भजतु शुभकरी सत्सुतं पुण्यनाम्नः ।

The large window or opening with which the hollowing out of the rock started and which remained as the most conspicuous part of the whole operation, was naturally called *Kīrtimukha, i.e.*, the opening to the interior *chaityamaṇḍapa* or *selaghara*. This kīrtimukha design was employed as a decorative motif on the facade of the earlier chaitya-halls. Later on it was used to enclose or frame beautiful human faces in the frieze of Gupta buildings, and in the third stage the human faces were replaced by lion-faces, when the word *Kīrtimukha* became synonymous with the lion-face motif :[3]

कीर्तिवक्त्रं हरेर्वक्त्रं चोक्तवत् कारयेत् सुधीः । (*Mānasāra*, 18.151)

According to the *Mānasāra* the front portion of the doorway (*mukhabhadra*) was to be decorated with the design of a *gavāksha*, a circular motif enclosing the figures of a *deva, bhūta, vyāla, simha, hamsa*, etc. and adorned by plants or creepers of foliated pattern, and this was beautified on the top by a projecting *Kīrtivaktra* or *Kīrtimukha* design :

नासिकावृतबाह्ये तु गवाक्षाकारं तु पत्रयुक् ॥१४४ ॥ तस्मादन्तर्गतैश्चादिदेवभूतादिरूपकैः ।
व्यालसिंहादिहंसाद्यैर्द्रुमवल्ल्यादिभूषितम् ॥१४५ ॥ तदूर्ध्वे कीर्तिवक्त्रं तु निर्गमाकृति भावयेत् ।

This *Kīrtivaktra* became a favourite motif in Gupta art, and dozens of sculptures are preserved in the Sarnath museum illustrating this ornamental design, showing a conventionalised grotesque form, with several features specially noted in the Mānasāra, *viz*, (*a*) large goggle eyes (दीर्घनेत्रं विशालं स्याद्), (*b*) round plump cheeks (वृत्तं गण्डस्थलं), (*c*) fan-shaped ears like those of an elephant (गजश्रोत्राकृतिश्रोत्रं), and (*d*) wavy lines on the lower portion of the cheeks (गण्डं चान्ते तरंगवत्, Mānasāra, 18. 147-148).

This motif began to be considered auspicious and expressive of the divine power of Rudra in warding off evil. The lion became an integral part of Śiva's retinue, as stated by Kālidāsa :

कैलासगौरं वृषमारुरुक्षोः पादार्पणानुग्रहपूतपृष्ठम् ।
अवेहि मां किंकरमष्टमूर्तेः कुम्भोदरं नाम निकुम्भमित्रम् ॥ (*Raghuvamśa* II. 35)

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[1] For this meaning of पञ्च, see also, सेकसुकुमारयवांकुरदंतुरैः पंचास्यैः कलशैःकोमलवर्णिकाविचित्रैरभिन्नमुखैश्चोद्भासितपर्यन्ताम् (Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harshacharita*, Nirnaya Sagar 5th Edn., p. 147 ; my Cultural Commentary on it, p. 83, where this difficult passage has been correctly explained in preference to Cowell & Kane.

[2] *JBBRAS*, V, p. 32, pl. XXVI ; *Arch. Survey of Western India Series*, No. 10, *Inscriptions from the Cave-temples of Western India*, Kanheri Caves, Ins. 1, line 8.

[3] See my article, Kīrti, Kīrtimukha And Kīrtistambha, *VĀK*, no. 5 (Feb. 1957), pp. 147-151, Deccan College, Poona.

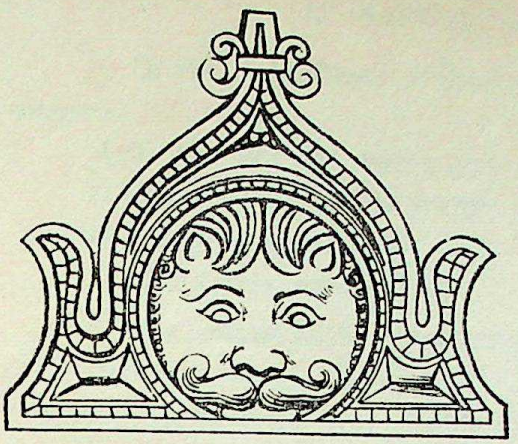


Fig. 142
Kirtimukha with lion-face (Ajanta)

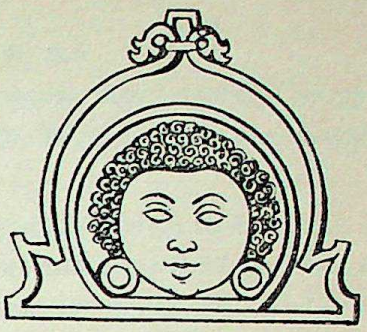


Fig. 143
Kirtimukha with female face (Ajanta)

Fig. 144
Panchavaktra (Harshanath Shiva temple)

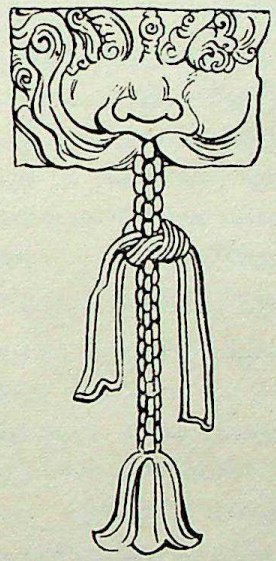


Fig. 147 (a)
Lion-face with chain (Mathura)

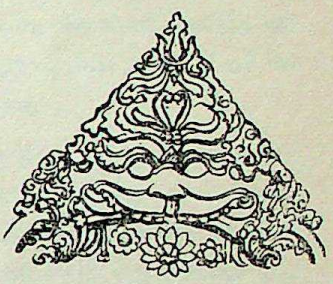


Fig. 145
Panchavaktra torana (Borobudur Stupa Java)

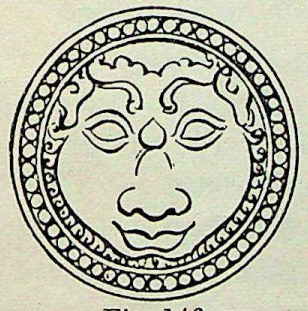
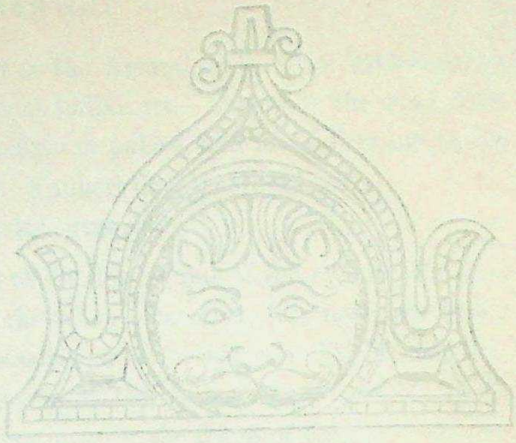
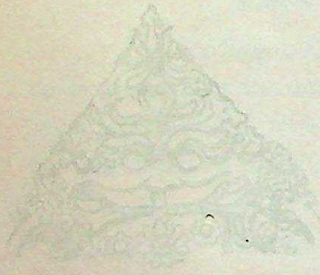


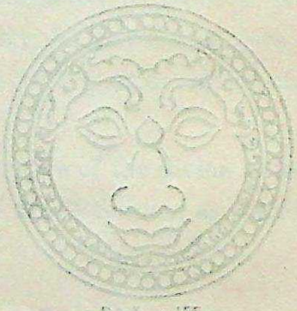
Fig. 146
Kirtimukha (Bharat Kala Bhavan)

Fig. 147 (b)
Terrific Lion-face (Ajanta)

Fig. 148
Lion-face with hamsas (Sarnath)







Of the Eight Forms of Śiva, as explained in Śaiva philosophy, there are three categories :

I Mind—called मनस्, यजमान, होत्री, दीक्षित, ब्राह्मण, सोमयाजी, etc.

II Energy—called प्राण, or प्राणापान, or सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ, representing the dual form of energy.

III Matter—comprising the Five Elements, पृथिवी, जल, तेज, वायु, आकाश, the पञ्चभूत or the gross material forms.

This constitutes the *Aṣṭamūrti* principle of manifestation, referred to by Kālidāsa as the eight visible forms of Śiva (प्रत्यक्षाभिः प्रपन्नस्तनुभिरवतु वस्ताभिरष्टाभिरीशः, *Śākuntala*). We find very ample elaboration of these in the *Liṅga Purāṇa* (Uttara Khaṇḍa, chs. 12, 13). The gross Five Elements or the Pañcha Bhūtas are symbolised by the lion, who is mentioned as the servant of Bhūtapati Śiva (*Bhūtanāthānuga, Raghu.* II. 58). The Five Elements were regarded as the five faces of Śiva called *Pañchānana* or *Pañchamukhī*, whose iconographic form was concived of as the Liṅga with 5 faces. By the use of double *entendre* on the word *Pañcha* the lion was also described as *Pañchānana* and considered to be an appropriate symbol of the *Pañchamūrtis* or the Five material Elements of Rudra's esoteric form.

The artistic symbol of the lion-face (*Kīrtivaktra* or *Harivaktra*) was gradually sublimated in the temple architecture of the Gupta age. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* giving an elaborate description of a *Sahasrapāda Prāsāda* of Śiva (corresponding to a *Sahasrastāmbha-maṇḍapa* temple) speaks of the lion-faces carved on the pillars, showing different expressions and beautified by the chain ornament fastened on the four sides of the shafts :

तस्य प्रासादमुख्यस्य स्तम्भेषूत्तमशोभिषु ॥२९०॥ संयताग्निमयीभिस्तु शृङ्खलाभिः पृथक् पृथक् ।
मायासहस्रं सिंहानां मुखं तत्र निवासिनाम् ॥२९१॥ (*Vāyu Purāṇa, ch. 101*)

The chain-motif with lion-faces is a typical description of Gupta pillars. Rudra and Agni were both considered to be identical (ŚB. 5.3.1. 10, etc.) and to be Paśupati :

सोऽ सौ रुद्रात्मको वह्निर्ब्रह्मणो मानसः सुतः । (*Śiva Purāṇa*, Vāyavīya Sam., 17.137)
रुद्रास्यानुचराग्नयः (*Harivaṁśa*, 2.122.24)
अहमग्निर्महातेजाः सोमश्चैषा महाम्बिका । (*Liṅga Purāṇa*, 1.34.7)
अग्निरित्युच्यते रौद्री घोरा या तैजसी तनुः । (*Śiva Purāṇa, Vāya.*, 28.3)

The chain-motif on the pillars thus symbolised the flames of fire and the lion-face the Paśupati aspect of Śiva. मायासहस्रं of Vāyu 101. 21 has reference to the multiple forms created by the Māyā or power of Rudra. Each of the thousand pillars in the temple of Śiva corresponds to the yūpa or stake of a Vedic Yajña. The Purnanic Ṛishis of naimishārāṇya questioned about the symbolism of the lion-faces and they were told that they represented 'the wrath' of Rudra, which born from his body or the single fiery principle assumes diverse myriad forms :

अथ तत्प्रतिसंपूज्य वायोर्वाक्यं सुविस्मिताः । ऋषयः प्रत्यभाषन्त नैमिषेयास्तपस्विनः ॥२९२॥
भगवन् सर्वभूतानां प्राण सर्वत्रग प्रभो । के ते सिंहमहाभूताः क्व ते जाताः किमात्मकाः ॥२९३॥

सिंहाः केनापराधेन भूतानां प्रभविष्णुना। वैश्वानरमयैः पाशैः संरुद्धास्तु पृथक् पृथक् ॥२९४॥
तेषां तद्वचनं श्रुत्वा वायुर्वाक्यं जगाद ह। यद्वै सहस्रं सिंहानामीस्वरेण महात्मना॥
व्यपनीय स्वकाद्देहात्क्रोधास्ते सिंहविग्रहाः ॥२९५॥ भूतानामभयं दत्वा पुरा बद्धाग्निबन्धने।
यज्ञभागनिमित्तं च ईश्वरस्याऽऽज्ञया तदा ॥२९६॥ (*Vāyu P. Ch. 101*)

The *Vaiśvānara* Fire manifesting in each body is the fiery chain that keeps the five elements in the form of lions (*Simha Mahābhūtas*) tied together. That Fire represents a flicker of Śiva's Anger (*Krodha*), which is the same as the *manyu* of the *Śata-rudriya* litany of the *Yajurveda :*

नमस्ते रुद्र मन्यवऽउतोतऽइषवे नमः। बाहुभ्यामुत ते नमः॥

Each lion symbolises the wrath of Rudra, but is kept restrained by the fiery chain forged for him in each Yajña. One of the beasts was permitted to get loose from this ordered dispensation (Vidhāna) and he as Vīrabhadra wrought havoc to Daksha's sacrifice :

तेषां विधानमुक्तेन सिंहेनैकेन लीलया। देव्या मन्युं कृतं ज्ञात्वा हतो दक्षस्य सक्रतुः ॥२९७॥
स एष भगवान् क्रोधो रुद्रावासकृतालयः। वीरभद्रोऽ प्रमेयात्मा देव्या मन्युप्रमार्जनः ॥२९८॥

The grotesque lion-face, Simhamukha or Kīrtimukha as described by the *Mānasāra* seems to have become very popular and a universal feature of Gupta temple architecture. From India the motif travelled to Indonesia where enormous *Kīrtimukha* crown the main entrance of the magnificent Śiva temple of Chandi Kalasan in the Prambanam group (Comoraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 203).

This *Kīrtimukha* motif received the technical name of pañchavaktra and found a conspicuous place on medieval temple gateways, as mentioned in the following :

मन्दारोभयपक्षे तु कीर्तिवक्त्रद्वयं भवेत् ॥१५॥ भृकुट्या कुटिलाक्षं च दंष्ट्राभिः समलंकृतम्।
कर्णोपशृंगैस्तदधः शाखापत्रैरलङ्कृतम् ॥१६॥ (*Aparājitapṛichchhā*, ch. 129)

i.e. on the sides of the two festoons (*mandāra*) there should be two *Kīrtivaktra*, whose grotesque apprearance should be indicated by frowning eyebrows, and bulging eyes, fangs, ears and projecting horns (*upśṛiṅga*). Or, we find in the *Kāśyapa-śilpa*,

पञ्चवक्त्रसमायुक्तं पार्श्वयोर्मकरास्यकम्।

i. e. on the gateway known as *makaratoraṇa*, there should be a *pūrīma* (spase-filling spiral or festoon) motif in the centre and on its two sides two makara-faces combined with the grotesque form of Pañchavaktra or *Kīrtimukhas* (*Kāśyapa-śilpa*, 12.8). Describing a *stambhatoraṇa*, it is said :

फलकं पञ्चवक्त्राढ्यं प्रागुक्तविधिना कुरु। वक्त्राख्यं मकराख्यं वा चित्रतोरणमेव वा॥
(*Kāśyapa-śilpa*, 14.27)

i. e. the front portion of the beam or lintel of a *toraṇa* should be adorned with the lion-face (*pañchavaktra*) motif, and it is variously named as *vaktratoraṇa*, *makaratoraṇa* or *chitratoraṇa*. Indeed in the medieval art-motifs the *pañchavaktra* or *Kīrtimukha* decoration

had become very much formalised so that it also seemed to resemble a *makaramukha*, specially owing to goggle eyes and projecting horns. The traditional architects name it as *girāsaḍā* from the word *grās* meaning a lion-face, and also *sāṅkaḍā*, from *śaṅku* or an elongated horn-like appendage.

We have in the *Padma Purāṇa* a parable relating to the origin of this rather important motif of the Kīrtimukha. It is said that once Rāhu, as the emissary of the demon-king Jalandhara, approached Śiva, causing great consternation amongst members of his family and their *vāhanas :*

अथेश्वर जटाजूटादाविरासीद् गणो महान् ॥३६॥
त्रिआननस्त्रिचरणस्त्रिपुच्छः सप्तहस्तवान् । स च कीर्तिमुखो नाम पिंगलो जटिलो महान् ॥३७॥
तं दृष्ट्वा च कपालाली भयात्तस्थौ मृतेव सा । पुरतः प्राह सगणस्ततः कीर्तिमुखः प्रभुम् ॥३८॥
प्रणिपत्य शिवं देवमत्यर्थं क्रुधितः प्रभो । तदोक्तः शंकरेणास भक्षयत्वं रणे हतान् ॥३९॥
क्षणं विचार्य सगणः क्वाप्यदृष्ट्वा रणं तदा । ब्रह्माणं भक्षितुं प्राप्तः शंकरेण निवारितः ॥४०॥
ततः कीर्तिमुखेनाथ स्वांगं सर्वं च भक्षितम् । भुक्षितेन चात्यन्तं निषिद्धेन च सर्वतः ॥४१॥
तत्साहसं तदा दृष्ट्वा भक्तिं कीर्तिमुखस्य च । तमुवाचेश्वरः प्रीतः प्रासादे तिष्ठ मे सदा ॥४२॥
त्वच्चित्तरहितो यश्च भविष्यति ममालये । स पतिष्यति शीघ्रं हीत्युक्तः सोऽन्तर्हितोऽ भवत् ॥४३॥

(*Padma Purāṇa*, Uttara Khaṇḍa, ch. 11).

The *Chandralekha* ornament on Śiva's head oozed out its ambrosial fluid owing to the fiery sniffings of the serpent Vāsuki, as a result of which Śiva's body was drenched with it, and the series of heads became fresh with life again and muttered their practised recitations. There ensued a lively debate amongst them as to each one's superior rank and priority of function, and they also became depressed with the thought of omissions in their duties. (Thus when the five heads were in a state of confusion) there sprang up a mighty Gaṇa from the pile of Śiva's matted locks. He has three faces, three feet, three tails and seven hands,—he was the mightly Kīrtimukha, having a resplendent tawny colour on the body and massive locks on the head.

The five heads of Śiva were struck dead at the sight of this strange creature. He bowed at Śiva's feet to pacify his enormous rage, and Śiva thereupon conferred on him the boon : You maintain yourself by making food of those who are killed in battle. But the Gaṇa Kīrtimukha, unable to find any battle ground ready at hand, pounced upon god Brahmā to devour him, but was restrained by Śiva. There upon the Gaṇa Kīrtimukha under the pangs of consuming hunger devoured his own body, and limbs. This bold action and devotion of his pleased Śiva who assigned to him an abode in his temples with the following stipulation 'he who enters my place but does not pay heed to you or does not become conscious of your presence, shall face an instantaneous doom.'

The above legend makes the Kīrtimukha motif a part of Śiva's iconography. Śiva is Rudra and identical with Agni or Prāṇic energy. He manifests himself as Pañcha-Brahman

or the Five Gross material Elements which are symbolised as the Five Heads on his body. On the plane of manifest life they have their respective functions and governed by an orderly dipensation. But when there is disorder and confusion amongst them in the *ante principium* stage, *i. e.* when their duties are not specifically marked or differentiated, they have the form of a single monster concealing all the heads in the form of matted locks. That is the Kīrtimukha emanation of Śiva himself. Śiva as Agni is represented by a *maṇḍala*, which is occupied by a pulsating Purusha of tawny colour (*Piṅgala Purusha*), who is no other than the *Akshara Purusha*, or Sūrya, or Angi himself, or Kālāgnirudra, the personified *rajoguṇa* or principle of activity. His place is very conspicuous, occupying the centre or apex of the main doorway of the divine temple. Any one who enters the tempe but is not conscious or attuned in mind to this presiding genius of life and prāṇic activity, becomes devoid of life in no time. The word *kīrti* originally signifying a rock-excavation, now becomes synonymous with *maṇḍala, mahimā or yaśas* and the 'face' filling it becomes esoterically indentical with Yājusha Purusha or Akshara Purusha, which is the same as Chākshusha Purusha residing in the Sun. Sūrya himself is the *Siṁhamukha*, the lion-face, the gaping mouth in respect of this cosmos. The *Kīrtimukha* or 'Face of Glory' is Āditya itself, where *Kīrti* from its inceptive meaning of 'a chaitya-window to a rock-cut interior' is synonymous with *Yaśas*:

अथैष वावयशः य एष (आदित्यः) तपति (ŚB 14.1.1.32)

'असौ वा आदित्यः पिंगलः, एष शुक्ल, एष नील, एष पीत, एष लोहितः

(*Chhāndogya U.* 8.6.1)

The Āditya is called Piṅgala and so is *Kīrtimukha* described to be *Piṅgala*; both are forms of Rudra or Agni. The *Kīrtimukha* is born of the matted locks of Rudra and is himself hairy (*jaṭila*). The significance of this is also clear. Keśa or hair is the *pravargya* or refuse or ejected portion of live energy. Rudra is the predominant principle of 'Life' and *Kīrtimukha* is its material manifestation pulsating with rhythm of expansion and contraction, which are spoken of as the two jaws (*hanū*) of an open mouth. The *Kīrtimukha* in this new setting assumed an all-comprehensive significance, equal to that of Rudra himself, and as the principal *Gaṇa* became the most important architectural feature of medieval temples both in India and Indonesia. The Purāṇas testify to the various stages in the evolution of the *Kīrtimukha* or *Pañchavaktra* motif of literature and art.

38. KĪRTI, KĪRTIMUKHA AND KĪRTISTAMBHA

I

Recently Dr. B. C. CHHABRA had drawn attention to the technical meaning of the word *kīrti* and its cognate *kīrtana*, both of which denoted 'a shrine' or 'a temple'. It is clear that, though in a majority of cases the word *kīrti* denotes 'a temple', it also means 'a monument' in general, 'any constructional work or sculptural object intended to perpetuate the memory of its author', and that in this sense the word *kīrtana* can also be employed[1]. We propose to examine the word more closely.

The mediaeval Sanskrit lexicons record *kīrti* as an equivalent of *prāsāda*—

kīrtir yaśasi vistāre prāsāde kardame'pi cha

(Hemachandra, Anekārthasaṁgraha).

MONIER-WILLIAMS on the authority of lexicons had recorded so early as 1899: '*kīrti*=*prasāda* (favour) or *prāsāda* (a palace)'. Although the printed text of the Medinī gives *kīrtiḥ prasāda-yaśasoḥ* and some others follow, it may be stated categorically that *prasāda* is an error for *prāsāda* and that *kīrti* never was an equivalent of *prasāda*. The other synonym *prāsāda* denotes both 'a temple' and 'a royal palace', as Dr. CHHABRA has mentioned. It is not correct to render *kīrti* as 'a palace', as Monier-Williams had done; the meaning of 'temple' or 'shrine' is more appropriate, but needs clarification.

Originally the word *kīrti* signified an excavated chaitya-hall. The earliest epigraphic use of *kīrti* occurs in a copper-plate inscription found in 1839 in front of the large arched cave or chaitya-hall at Kanheri on a ledge of the mountain, some 30 or 40 feet below inside a big tope with 2 coins and dated in the year 245 of the Traikūṭakas (A.D. 493):

tāvat kīrtiḥ sthireyaṁ bhajatu śubhakarī satsutaṁ pushyanāmnaḥ[2]

'So long may this permanent *kīrti* remain auspicious to Pushya's noble son!'. What was the nature of this *kīrti* monument is mentioned in the epigraph as:

Ārya—śāradvatīputrasya chaityaṁ ghaṭitapāshāṇeshṭakābhiḥ.....pratishṭhāpitavān,

i.e. 'he established the chaitya of dressed stone-bricks which was dedicated to the venerable *Śāradvatīputra*. It is to be noted that the chaitya was not a *chaityamaṇḍapa* or chaitya-hall but a stūpa which was also called *chaitya*. The expression *ghaṭitapāshāṇeshṭakā* may mean 'dressed stone blocks and bricks' or dressed stone-bricks, preferably the latter. One thing is clear that the monument referred to as *kīrti* in 493 A.D. was structural and not rock-cut. The meaning of *kīrti* current in the fifth century applied to such monuments as were then

[1] B. Ch. CHHABRA, *Kīrti:* Its Connotation, *Siddha-Bhāratī*, pp. 38-42.

[2] Published in the *JBBRAS*, V. p. 32, pl. XXVI; Archaeological Survey of Western India Series, No. 10, Inscriptions from the Cave-temples of Western India, Kanheri Caves, Ins. 1, line 8.

known. Structural stūpas and chaitya-halls and Brahmanical temples had come to be erected in the Gupta period, side by side with rock-cut caves or chaitya-halls and even rock-cut temples.

To understand the origin of the word *kīrti* we must look to the earlier tradition of the pre-structural stage of chaitya monuments.

As firmly evidenced by the chaitya-halls at Bhājā, Pītalkhorā, Koṇḍane, Bedsa, Karle, Kanheri, Ajaṇṭā, etc. these *selaghara, selamaṇṭava, chetiaghara* monuments were excavated in the face of live rock. Their construction was remarkable, comprising a large opening to admit light and air, an inner pillared hall with vaulted roof, two aisles, and a semi-circular apse accommodating a rock-cut stūpa. It has been admitted by all authorities that prior to the introduction of rock artchitecture there was a stage when the chaitya-halls were erected in timber. Such appears to have been the *chaitya-prāsāda* of Rāvaṇa in Laṅkā which was reduced to ashes by Hunumān :

tatra chāgniḥ samabhavat prāsādaś chāpy adahyata. (Sundara. 43. 18).

But gradually the technique of cutting the chaitya-halls in rock was discovered and perfected, and this architectural mode fired the imagination of the people.

Here then there was the scope for a new word. The cutting or scooving of the rock commenced with the boring of an opening into the facade of the intended chaitya-hall. The facade (*gharāmukha*) consisted of two parts, a large opening above now called chaitya-window and a lower solid screen pierced by three doors, one in the centre to give access to the nave (*maṇḍapa*) and the two side ones to the two aisles (*pradakshiṇāpātha*). As the work proceeded the opening was widened and the debris from inside was thrown or cast outside through that opening. The hollowed out *maṇḍapa* of the interior was given the literal designation of *kīrti* and the initial opening with which the cutting commenced and which served a very real function in the execution stage was naturally called *kīrtimukha.* The ancient terms for our modern *chaitya*-window must have been *kīrtimukha.* We are familiar with the root *ut-kṛī*—'to dig up or out, hollow out, excavate, carve, engrave'. The root is shown to have the meanings 'to pour out, scatter, throw, cast' (MONIER-WILLIAMS). The word *kīrti* was a verbal noun from √*kṛī* and in the earliest semantic phases was considered quite adequate to denote a modest and plain excavated or hollowed out chamber, such as the early cells (*garbha*) and caves (*guhā*) must have been. That the original rock-cut chaitya-halls must have been so designated is also borne out by the historical etymology of the two subsequent words *kīrtimukha* and *kīrtistambha.* Let us first dispose of the second one.

II. KĪRTISTAMBHA

Literally the word *kīrtistambha* implies 'a pillar associated with *kīrti*'. We actually have such free-standing lofty pillars in front of the chaitya-halls at Karle, Kanheri, etc. As a matter of fact such pillars formed an integral part of the earliest *chaitya-prāsāda* architecture.

This is borne out by the description of the *prāsāda* in Laṅkā, of which a monumental pillar formed a distinguishing land-mark: *prāsādasya mahāṁs tasya stambhaṁ hemaparishkṛitam/ utpāṭayitvā vegena Hanumān mārutātmajaḥ* (Sundara. 43 17).

We may go even earlier, and we find that the stūpa monument, when standing under the open sky, had also its free standing pillars. The mounds of thick yellow clay rammed as hard as stone, at Lauriya Nandangarh offer typical examples. Their contents indicate that they were burial mounds. In the particular mound in which a piece of gold-leaf with the figure of the Earth Goddess was found, a little below that level was discovered a long hollow shaft 10″ in diameter showing that once a wooden pillar was placed there. In another adjoining mound the shaft of the wooden pillar was found *in situ*. We have another instance in the Aśokan pillar installed in front of one of the Gateways of the Great Sānchī Stūpa. Probably reference to a wooden pillar (*sthūṇā*) associated with a mound of earth raised over the relics of the departed ones may be traced to the Ṛigveda X. 18. 13.[1] The Sabhāparvan refers to such a pillar erected on the top of a *śmaśāna chaitya* as *chaityayūpa*, the two together invoked as a befitting *upamāna* in point of loftiness to Vishṇu riding on Garuḍa.[2]

Thus in accordance with a well-established old custom the *caitya-prāsāda* was provided with its associative column. This explains the existence of *kīrtistambhas* in front of *kīrti* excavations.

III. KĪRTIMUKHA

The term *kīrtimukha* was at the outset applied to the chaitya-window or the big round opening through which the excavation work began and gradually proceeded. It was virtually the gaping mouth of the excavated interior. The curve of the opening was rudimentary in the earliest caves being broader at the base; it then became hemispherical, the two open ends of the curve were still further drawn inside until it became a perfect circle in the Gupta period. Apart from its functional role as an opening for scooving in the rock and subsequently for admitting light and air into the dark interior of the hall, the *kīrtimukha* was also adopted as a decorative pattern and its miniature repetitions were employed to beautify the cornice mouldings or doorways or other portions of the facade. In this new setting the small chaitya-windows enclosed human heads, mostly female faces peeping out of windows (*gavāksha* or *vātāyana*). On the facade of the chaitya-hall of cave XIX at Ajaṇṭā, we find the miniature chaitya-windows with female faces employed as a very elegant decorative device on the exterior of the cave. In course of time the human faces were substituted by lion-faces

[1] *ut te stabhnāmi pṛithivī tvat parīmaṁ logaṁ nidadhan mo ahaṁ risham. etāṁ sthūṇāṁ pītaro dhārayantu te' trā yamaḥ sādanā te minotu.* I keep off the earth above thee, while over thee I place this clod (or heap) of earth. May I be free from injury. Here let the Pitṛis make stead-fast this pillar for thee, and there let Yama make an abiding place for thee."

[2] *chintayāmāsa kṛishṇo 'tha garutmantaṁ sa chābhyayāt, kshaṇe tasmin sa tenāsīch chaityayūpa ivochchhṛitaḥ* Sabhā 22.22, Poona Edn.

as decorative members of the chaitya-window patterns, and these became known as *kīrtimukhas* or *kīrtivaktras*. On the pillars of the Gupta period we find the *kīrtimukha* decoration in which the lion-face has been accepted as a natural member of the pattern. But the *kīrtimukhas* attained to their fullest possibility as an architectural member on the front portion of the *śikhara* of a Hindu temple. The functional chaitya-window or the large circular opening of the excavated caves had long been superseded or left behind, but it was retained as the principal decorative element on the facade of the *śikhara*. This monumental lion-face was termed *kīrtivaktra* (*tadūrdhve kīrtivaktraṁ tu nirgamākṛitiṁ bhāvayet*, *Mānasāra* 18. 146) or *harivaktra* (*kīrtivaktraṁ harivaktraṁ choktavat kārayet sudhīḥ*, *Mānsāra*, 18. 151).

IV. KĪRTANA

The word *kīrtana* was derived from the same root as *kīrti* and used in the same sense. Grammatically they are analogous to *dṛishṭi* and *darśana*. From the seventh century onwards the use of *kīrtana* for a 'temple' became increasingly popular. Āryasūra had used it in the Jātakamālā as a current term of the Gupta cultural vocabulary (*śrīmanti kīrtanaśatāni niveśitāni satrājir āśramapadāni sabhāḥ prapāś cha*. Jātakamālā, p. 219; Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, p. 184). But the most conspicuous use of the word occurs in the Ellora Inscription engraved on the Kailāsa temple which is called a *kīrtana : kartāpi yasya khalu vismayaṁ āpa śilpī tan nāma kīrtanam akārayata yena rājñā*. Dr. Fleet missed the significance of the word and rendered it as 'fame' (*Ind. Ant.*, XII. 159). But Dr. Hultzsch appraised its true meaning and worte that 'the word must be taken to signify a temple' (*Ind. Ant.* XII. pp. 228-229). Hultzsch added two examples from literature, viz. from the Kādambarī (*kurvan kīrtanāni lēkhayan śāsanāni.....Pṛithivīṁ vichachāra*, 'he travelled the earth .....constructing temples and causing land grants to be written.' and the Agnipurāṇa (*kīrtanāni cha kārayet*), 'cause temples to be constructed'. As noted by Dr. P. K. Acharya, it was originally Pt. Bhagavanlal Indraji who had realised *kīrtana* as a technical term meaning 'a temple', 'a shrine' (*Ind. Ant.* IX, pp. 34, 36 and note 13). (Acharya, *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu Architecture*, p. 117-118).

In an inscription dated V. S. 1093 (A.D. 1036) are found the significant words *kīrtitaṁ*, with reference to a Vishṇu temple in a cave at Udayagiri near Bhilsa (B. C. Chhabra, *op. cit.* p. 42). The past participle form *kīrtitaṁ* means 'was built' and here the original sense of the root *kṛī* was retained in its semantic evolution.

39. SCULPTURE : GUPTA PERIOD (300-600 A.D.)

The period from about 300 to 1200 A.D. falls into three divisions of almost equal length during which Indian sculpture passed through three phases of maturity. Stylistically, these phases correspond to the Classical, Gothic and Rococo conventions of Western art. In Indian history they are known as the Gupta (300-600 A.D.), the early medieval (600-900 A.D.) and the late medieval periods (900-1200 A.D.). The present chapter deals with the history and characteristic features of Indian sculpture during the first phase, whilst the last two phases will be treated in their proper place in the next section.

The Gupta period has often been described as the Golden Age of Indian history, above all in the domain of art. In the words of Kālidāsa, the greatest thinker of the age, the art of the period maybe described literally as 'fine art' (*lalita-kalā*, *Raghuvaṁśa*, VIII, 67). It reflected indeed a passion for refinement that was patent in every walk of life ; it eliminated ponderousness and volume and concentrated more and more on elegance, producing ultimately a surpassing grace and delicacy which distingish Gupta work from that of all other ages.

Gupta sculpture is, more consciously and explicitly than most schools of plastic art, a synthesis between the external form and the inner meaning. As Kālidāsa has put it, it is like the union of Speech and Thought (*vāg-artha-saṁpṛikta*, *Ragh.* I, 1). The spiritual content underlying the outer forms of Gupta art is writ eloquently in the faces of the Buddhist and Brahmanical images, which combine an intense religious feeling with a tranquil and classical charm. Such expression can only represent the achievement of a true harmony, at this period, of thought and action in the actual lives of men. In the religious sphere the Bodhisattva ideal of the preceding Kushāṇa epoch, enjoining each to live for all, gave place to a new ideal of the attainment of the highest wisdom as an individual objective (*anuttra-jñānāvāpti*). In accordance with this new outlook, each seeker looked for reality within himself and strove for individual deliverance. He became himself a glowing centre of beauty and spirituality. The introvert vision of the Gupta Buddha image is sharply distinguished from the open, smiling countenance of the Kushāṇa Bodhisattva. Peace, light, and bliss, emblems of the highest wisdom, are reflected in the radiant visage of the Gupta Buddha. The change is visible to anyone who looks at a seated image of Buddha carved in the Sarnath School (*Fig. 120*) or the standing Buddha image of the monk Yaśadinna wrought in serene contemplation, or the image of the sage Kapila in the Isurumuniya Vihāra in Ceylon.

The Buddha image was first made some time in the early Kushāṇa period. The evidence of the dated images points to the beginning of the reign of Kanishka as the time of its first appearance in stone. The image from Kosam is dated in the year 2 of Kanishka;

i.e. 80 A.D., or forty years later according to some scholars. The seated Bodhisattva image from Kaṭrā Keshavadeva, Mathura, although undated, is considered to be a typical example of the art of the first century A.D. (*Fig. 150*). If we compare it with standing Buddha image of monk Yaśadinna in the Mathura Museum, we notice a remarkable difference of style. The distinguishing features of the Kushāṇa and the Gupta images of Buddha and Bodhisattva may be briefly tabulated as follows :

	KUSHANA	GUPTA
1.	Plain halo with scalloped margin.	Elaborate halo covered with lotus design.
2.	Absence of beaded border in the halo.	Presence of beaded border as part of the decoration of the halo.
3.	Simple background of seated figures.	High-backed throne with horizontal architrave and brackets of prancing figures (*vyāla-toraṇa*), as in the seated Buddha at Sarnath.
4.	Muscular body.	Elegance of form.
5.	Shaven hair. Spiral hairlock covering bump of intelligence.	Shaven hair type extremely rare. Hemispherical protuberance on head covered with short curls.
6.	Bodhi tree carved on the back slab.	Absence of the Bodhi tree.
7.	Drapery partly plain and partly folded ; folds less stylised.	Drapery entirely shown folded ; folds more stylised. Specimens with foldless drapery rare.
8.	Folds of *saṃghāṭī* engraved.	Folds shown in relief.
9.	Drapery covers the left shoulder (*ekāṁsika*).	Drapery covers both shoulders (*ubhayāṁsika*).
10.	The lower garment reaching the middle of the leg from knee to ankle.	Drapery falling still lower.
11.	Presence of fly-whisk bearing attendants in seated images.	Absence of this feature.
12.	Right hand in *abhayamudrā* joined to the back slab with a projecting cushion.	Right hand in *abhayamudrā* carved free.
13.	*Ūrṇā* mark between the eyebrows usually present.	Same mark absent in most cases.
14.	Eyes round and fully opened ; the line of the eyelids projecting.	Eyes elongated and slightly opened ; no projecting eye-line.
15.	Upper and lower eye-lids equal. Figure looking up or towards the spectator.	Upper eyelid broader. Gaze fixed at tip of nose.
16.	Plain border of *saṃghāṭī*.	Edge of the *saṃghāṭī* frilled and ornamented.

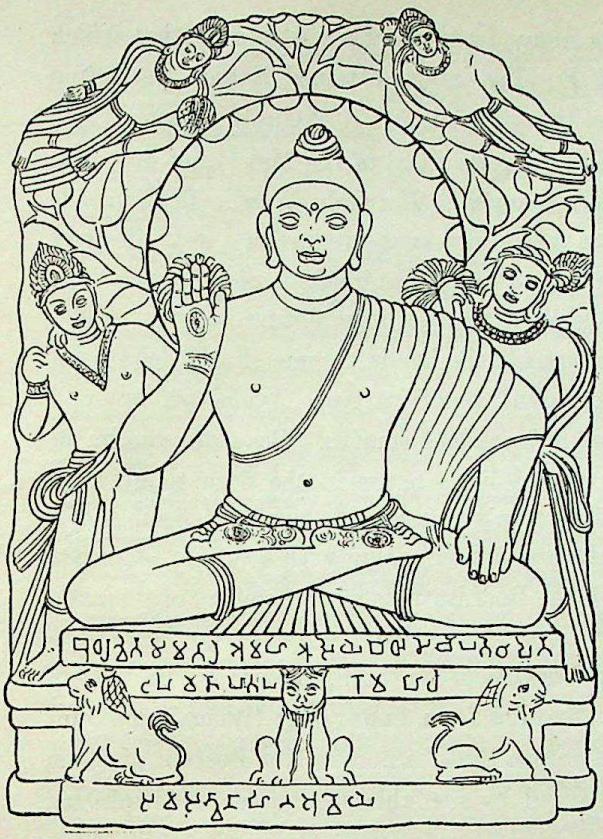


Fig. 150 Bodhisattva Image from Kaṭrā Keshavadeva, Mathura Ist Century A.D.

Fig. 151 Bhairava—Terracotta plaque from Ahichchhatra, Gupta Period.

Fig. 152 Peripatetic Aspect of Śiva with the begging bowl, Ahichchhatra, Gupta Period.

Fig. 158 Dakshiṇāmūrti—Terracotta plaque from Ahichchhatra, Gupta period.

Thus the Gupta type of image shows many features of stylistic evolution which can be easily distinguished. Aesthetically the Buddha image attained a high perfection in early Gupta art. It becomes the true vehicle of the spiritual quality of Gupta culture, which found its consummation in Perfect Wisdom. This supreme ideal of the Mahāyāna was now, according to the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, called the *Ekayāna*, 'The Only Way'. Both in the seated and the standing images, the figures are gracefully conceived with "wet" drapery revealing the form without excess of folds or ornamentation. The image is now fully evolved and becomes the arch-type for all subsequent Buddhas, whether in sculpture or in painting, and whether in India or abroad. The *mudrās* or poses of the hands become clearly defined for specific purposes. The figures of the two attendant Boddhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya, establish themselves in full majesty as independent images. Beautiful specimens of them have been found; for example. the Avalokiteśvara figure in the Sarnath Museum standing on a fullblown lotus.[1] Near the Bodhisattva's feet appear two tantalized spirits (*preta*) with emaciated bodies whom the compassionate lord is feeding with a stream of nectar flowing from his right hand. Similarly the cult of the Bodhisattvas with the effigy of their spiritual parents, the Buddhas, became widely popular in this period. Amongst the best creations of the age may be reckoned the standing Buddha of Mathurā, the seated Buddha of Sarnath in preaching pose, the colossal copper Buddha from Sultangunj (Bhagalpur), now preserved in the Birmingham Museum, and the bronze Buddha now in the Boston Museum —all products of about the 5th century and marked by ineffable sweetness and spiritual calm.

Another aspect of Gupta art is its wide geographical range. From Dahparbatiyā in Assam to Mīrpurkhās in Sind, monuments of Gupta sculpture are scattered all over the country-side. Great centres of the art included Sārnāth, Mathurā, Pāṭaliputra, Devagarh, Bhītargaon, Udaigiri, Nāgod, Bhumarā, Ajantā, and the Gandhāra province, where a great mass of remarkable sculpture, in stone and in stucco or baked clay, was produced. Outside India, the school exercised far-reaching influence on the art of China and the Far-East, moulding them into something of an all-Asian pattern.

Architecturally, Gupta sculpture is often integrated with the increasingly elaborate architecture of structural temples and excavated cave-shrines. In the Kushāṇa period the image was predominant and the modest shrine was only just beginning to appear. It more or less resembled the form of a *gandha-kuṭī* improvised with three plain slabs held in position by a flat top. In the Gupta period the image of the deity, now fully evolved, found its counterpart in a fully evolved temple with flat roof, porch and plinth. The two match admirably and each a gem in its own way fits the other like jewel and its setting. Subsidiary images and reliefs of attendant figures also find their due place in the scheme of temple-decoration. For instance, at Devagarh the main enshrined image must have contributed

1 Sarnath B(d) 1—*Catalogue of the Sarnath Museum*, pl. XIII (b).

not a little to the beauty of the temple ; but so also, and more obviously, did the carved reliefs representing subsidiary images on the plinth and doorway. The entrance of the Daśāvatāra temple marks the high point of exquisite carving. The figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the upper corners and the pairs of male and female attendants (*pratihārīs*) occupying the lower portions of the jambs are fine specimens of sculpture. Other decorative motifs on Gupta doorways included figures of dwarfs (*pramatha*), small flowers (*phullavallī*), scroll work (*patrāvalī* or *patralatā*), the auspicious tree (*Śrīvṛiksha*), the full-vase (*pūrṇaghaṭa*), and pairs of flying geese (*haṁsamālā*) (*Fig. 11*). We also find in some places the lotus and conch symbols (*śaṅkha* and *padma*) carved on the jambs. These together with the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā form a characteristic feature of Gupta art, and both are mentioned in the works of Kālidāsa. As a typical decorative feature of the seated images may be mentioned the highbacked seat with a prancing horse or animal (*vyāla-toraṇa*) between the pillars of the architraves on both sides of the back, e.g. on the seat of the SarnathBuddha image.

Sculpture also found a due place in the cave-architecture of the period. Specially rich in this aspect are the facades of Cave XIX at Ajanta and of the Caves at Karli and Kanheri, in which images of the Buddha occur as a beautiful and effective feature of the decoration.

From the point of view of iconography, the Gupta age marks an advance over the preceding Kushāṇa period. In the Kushāṇa art at Mathurā the earliest forms of Buddhist iconography appear in the images of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and the age was also the formative period for the images of the principal Brahmanical gods such as Vishṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, Kārttikeya and Sūrya, and of goddesses such as Sarasvatī, Lakshmī and Pārvatī. But the artists were still feeling their way and conventions were elastic. With the advent of the Gupta age, about 300 A.D., not only do the sculptors follow conventionalized formulas (*dhyāna*), but they also work on an expanded pantheon in which the number of gods and goddesses and their *līlās* greatly increased. For example, Vishṇu, is represented holding different attributes in his four hands, and also in the guise of his various incarnations (*avatāras*) of Trivikrama, Varāha, Narasiṁha, Rāma and Kṛishṇa. The form of Vishṇu resting on the cosmic serpent Sesha appears in several examples, the most outstanding being the one at Devagarh (*Fig. 12*). The deities Kārttikeya, Indra, Brahmā and Śiva also appear in their developed iconographic forms in the upper part of this panel. In the same temple are two other sculptured reliefs encased in door-frames, forming niches projecting exteriorly from the temple walls known as *rathikā-bimba*, and representing two other parts of Vishṇu legend, namely, his rescue of the lord of elephants from the clutches of a gigantic serpent (*Gajendramoksha*), and Nara and Nārāyaṇa engaged in austerities in their Himālayan hermitage at Badarīnātha (*Nara-Nārāyaṇa-tapasyā*). In this important temple, dedicated to Vishṇu under the name of Keśavapurasvāmī, were carved in the panels of the plinth the life-stories of Rāma

[1] Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* figs. 158-161.

and Kṛishṇa. The scenes from the Rāmāyaṇa include Rāma and Lakshmaṇa practising archery, the redemption of Ahalyā, Sītā and the two brothers marching to the forest, and the episode of Śūrpaṇakhā (*Figs. 131-33*). In several minor panels fixed in the upper course of the plinth were found subsidiary scenes, e.g. monkeys making a bridge over the sea, Bāli and Sugrīva combating each other, and Sugrīva appeasing the angry Lakshmaṇa.

The story of Kṛishṇa had not previously been identified in the Devagarh temple, but recent examination has revealed scenes from the Kṛishṇa-līlā carved on some panels of the plinth. The more conspicuous ones depict Kṛishṇa's birth and transference from the prison cell, Nanda and Yaśodā with the holy children in Gokula, the toppling-over of the toy-cart (*śakaṭa-līlā*), and others. Perhaps the most interesting is the scene showing Kṛishṇa receiving his supplicating friend Sudāmā leaning on a crooked staff, in the presence of Rukmiṇī, perplexed at the generosity of her husband. In a couple of Gupta sculptures of the Mathurā school, Kṛishṇa's dance on the head of a serpent (*Kāliya-damana*) has been identified.

The remarkable bronze statue of Brahmā from Mīrpurkhās, Sind, now deposited in the Karachi Museum, is an exceptionally good specimen of the art of metal-casting in this period. But comparable with Vishṇu in rank and popular grace was Śiva, whose classical story is sung with exceptional charm by Kālidāsa. By devoting his attention both to Rāma through the *Raghuvaṁśa* and to Śiva through the *Kumārasambhava*, Kālidāsa, as the representative genius of the times, points to the synthesis of the rival claims of these two gods. We have evidence in Kushāṇa sculpture of the Pāśupatas and the Bhāgavatas fashioning their images to win sectarian recognition. During the Gupta period Śiva and Vishṇu are no longer sectarian deities but emerge as national gods entitled to universal adoration and the same high honour was bestowed on the Buddha; and images of Śiva in the form of *ekamukhā-linga* now came much into vogue (*Fig. 136*).

The most important group of Gupta temples has survived in Central India, namely at Udaigiri, Bhumarā and Khoh in Nāgod State and at Nachnā-Kutharā in Ajaigarh State. The temple at Bhumarā has preserved a fine Śiva-*liṅga* and a still finer one has been found at Khoh. These temples also contain images of the principal gods and goddesses of the Brahmanical pantheon popular in classical times. A conclave of them is found in each temple, almost corresponding to their enumeration by Kālidāsa in the *Kumārasambhava* (II. 20-26); that at Bhumarā, for example, preserves those of Yama, Sūrya, Kubera, Brahmā, Indra, Kārttikeya and Mahishāsuramardinī. The colossal image of Mahāvarāha at Udaigiri, depicting the scene of the rescuing of the earth from the ocean (*pṛithivī-udvahana*) is a powerful sculpture and affords an instance of geo-tectonic movement expressed in art. A kindred subject is the lifting of Kailāsa by Rāvaṇa, found at Mathurā, and Mount Govardhana by Kṛishṇa, of which a bea-

[1] *Kumārasambhava*, VII, 42 (*mūrte cha Gaṅgā-Yamune tadānīṁ sachāmare devam-asevishātām*); *Meghadūta*, II, 17 (*dvāropānte likhita-vapushau śaṅkha-padmau*).

Fig. 149. Mahānārāyaṇa Vishṇu,. Mathura, Gupta Period.

utiful example exists on a pillar from Māṇḍor in Jodhpur State.[1] The sculpture of the late Gupta and early Pallava period shows other examples of the successful rendering of tense colossal movement in sculpture, of which the Mahishāsuramardinī carved at Mahabalipuram is a good example.

In the great Śiva temple at Ahichchhatrā were recently unearthed a number of beautiful terracotta plaques of large size, which had formed part of the frieze around the upper terrace of the temple and depicted the principal events in Śiva's life : his destruction of the sacrifice of Daksha Prajāpati, his father-in-law, the holocaust wrought there by his playful *gaṇas*, his assumption of the terrific form of Bhairava (*Fig. 151*), his peripatetic aspect with the begging-bowl in hand (*Fig. 152*), his *[illegible]va-retas* form as *Lakulīśa*, his dalliances with Pārvatī in the renewed marital life, and finally [illegible]eful ascetic form as Dakshiṇāmūrti, Lord of *yoga* and divine wisdom[2] (*Fig. 153*). With the growth of the complex Puranic pantheon a full picture of which can be built up from the works of Bāṇabhaṭṭa in the first half of the 7th century A.D., the scope of Saivic iconography was greatly enlarged, and this is more fully reflected in the next phase of artistic development represented in the great temples of Aihole and Ellora built during the early Chālukya and the Rāshṭrakūṭa periods.

The terracotta art of the Gupta period was a major factor in the development of the art-consciousness of the age, and claimed a place of honour alongside stone-sculpture, painting, and architecture. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, in a poetic reference to the love-smitten condition of Vaiśampāyana, speaks of him as being seated statuesquely like a pillar in a building (*stambhita iva*), a figure in painting (*likhita iva*), a carved image in sculpture (*utkīrṇa iva*), or a figure modelled in clay (*pustamaya iva*).

Fortunately a fair number of temples built in brick with ornamental mouldings and friezes of terracotta-panels survive from this period and are distributed over a wide area in the Panjab, the Uttara Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal. Speaking of the Shorkot temple Cunningham remarks : "The moulded bricks are the most characteristic feature of all the old cities in the plains of the Panjab. The variety of patterns is infinite and some of them are very bold and effective."[3] Many of the famous buildings in Northern India at the time of Mohammadan invasion must have been built entirely of brick and were decorated with terracotta ornaments and alto-relievos. This was certainly the case with the great temple of the Sun at Multan, the famous shrine of Jogsoma at Thānesar, the great Buddhist buildings at Sankisā, Kauśāmbī and Śrāvastī, all the Brahmanical temples of the Gupta period at Bilsar, Bhītargaon, Garhwā and Bhītrī, and also the great brick temples of Bodhgayā and Nālandā.[4] The bricks show a

[1] Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 86, fig. 166 ; A.S.I. *A.R.*, 1905-6, p. 135, fig. 1.

[2] *Ancient India*, No. 4 (July 1947-Jan. 48), p. 167, figs. 298-302.

[3] Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, V, p. 100, pl. XXIX, 1-8.

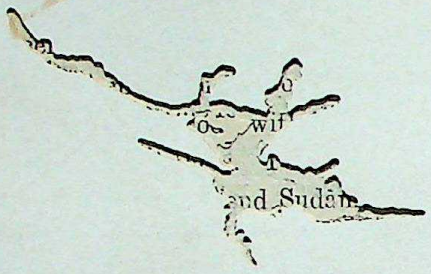
[4] Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, XI, p. 42 ; *A.S.I.*, A.R., 1908-9, p. 5, pl. V.

PLATE VI.

Ganga. Fire-sized clay statue. Ahichchhatra Siva Temple.

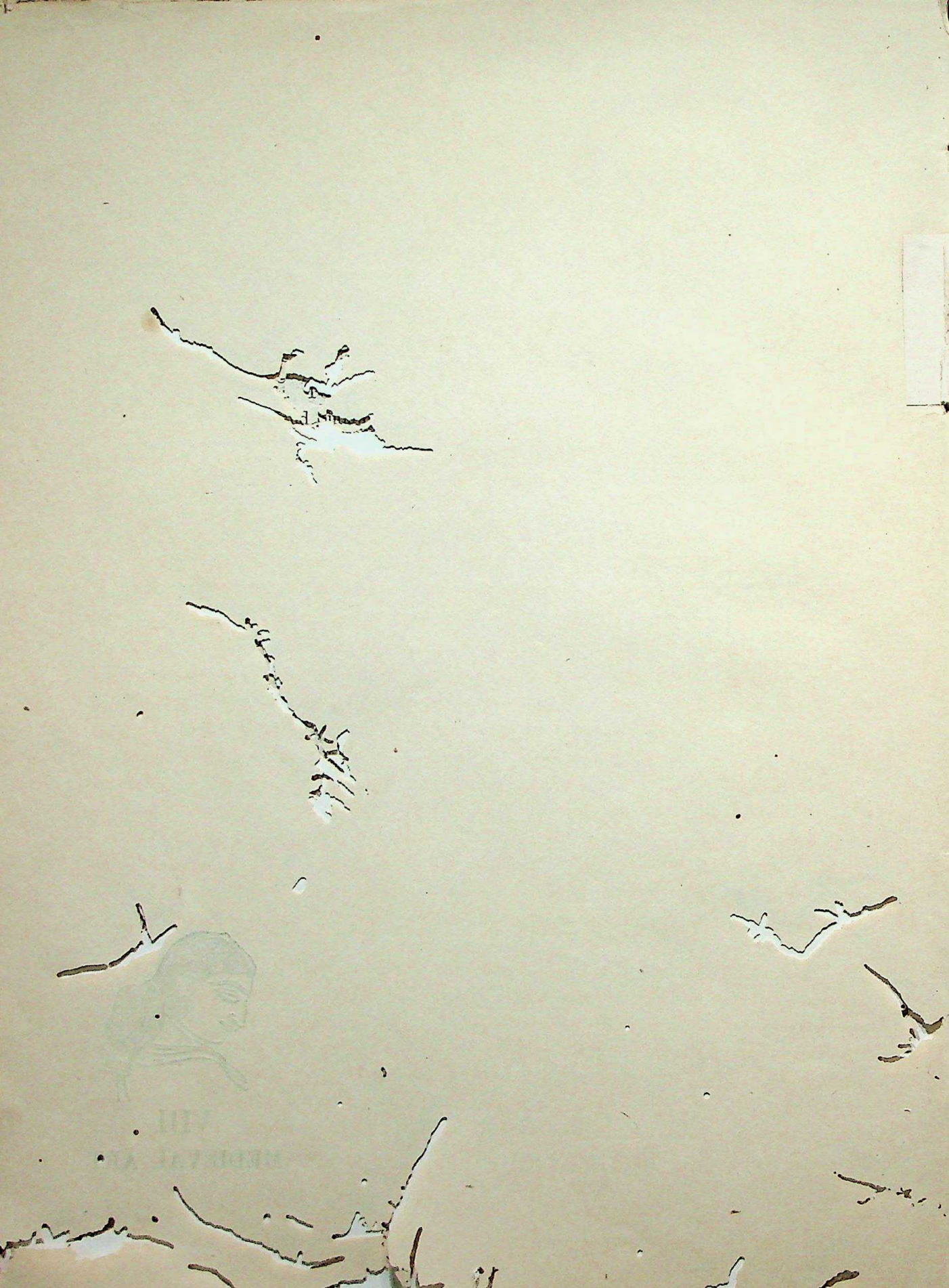
PLATE V.

Yamuna. Lifesize Clay Statue. Ahichchhatra Siva Temple.



VIII

MEDIEVAL ART



pleasing variety of designs, such as the *nandyāvarta*, lotus, dogtongue, guilloche, fret or diaper. The stucco figures and terracottas connected with these temples show an equally high quality. The Bhītargaon temple in Kanpur district contains a frieze of panels with sharply defined features of much excellence, but has not yet been adequately illustrated in detail.[1] The Rāmāyaṇa panels from Sahet-Mahet are full of liveliness, although inferior in art. The large image of Pārvatī from Kasia, now in the Lucknow Museum, must have presented a technical problem in baking, as it is always difficult to fire a clay image of this dimension. The life-sized clay images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā fixed at the two sides of the steps leading to the upper terrace of the Ahichchhatrā Śiva temple were also remarkable specimens when complete. By far the best examples of the stucco art of the Gupta period, however, were the images (now mostly destroyed) on the Maṇiyār Maṭh at Rājgṛiha, which were fixed round the base of a circular structure and consisted of a Śivaliṅga, a six-armed dancing Śiva, a four-armed deity wrongly identified as Bāṇāsura, and several Nāgas and Nāgiṇīs, the latter showing fine and sensitive workmanship. These sculptures afford the capacity of the Gupta clay-modellers to execute clay sculpture of considerable size. On a lower scale, the Gupta coroplasts took full advantage of the terracotta medium to broadcast the aesthetic message of their times. The numerous small clay figurines found at most sites present a veritable inventory, as it were, of the types of men and women in all grades of society.

We also find, both in stone and in modelled bricks, an infinite variety of scroll-motifs, with a tendency towards arabesque. The most conspicuous example of this decoration is available in the casing slabs round the Dhamekh Stūpa at Sarnath, perhaps the most successful example of large surface-decoration in this technique in ancient India (*Fig. 119*). Contemporary literature refers to scroll-work as *patrāvalī*, *patralatā*, *patriṅguli*, etc. The fashion for deep-cut scroll-work was increasing and found its culmination in the stone *Jālī*, of which the earliest specimens can be seen in the perforated temple-screens at Aihole, that with radiating fish-spokes in the Lāḍkhan temple being particularly notable.[2] This temple has been ascribed to about 450 A.D.

Gupta art and culture continued in full bloom during the first half of the seventh century, when Harsha was ruling in north India. The University of Nālandā was at the height of its glory and shared equally in the field of literary and artistic activity. Hiuen Tsang mentions several colossal images that he saw in north India at this time, specially the 80′-high copper image of Buddha set up by king Pūrṇavarman in the early 7th century at Nālandā. The colossus no longer exists, but other remains at Nālandā have preserved evidence of advanced artistry; for example, the decorative reliefs with beautiful *kinnara* motifs and lotuses in Site I, and

[1] *A.S.I., A.R.*, 1908-9, pp. 8-16, pl. I, V, and fig. 2.

[2] *A.S.I., A.R.*, 1907-8, pl. LXXI.

a series of more than 200 sculptured panels in Site II of the 6th-7th century A.D.[1] The Gupta sculptures and detached images at Sanchi are "infused with the same spirit of calm contemplation, of almost divine peace, as the images of 4th and 5th centuries, but they have lost the beauty of definition which the earlier artists strove to preserve and, though still graceful and elegant, tend to become stereo-typed and artificial ."[2]

In the Madhya Pradesh the brick temples at Sīrapura (ancient Śrīpura), Rājim and Kharod, each has a stone doorway in typical Gupta style showing figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The door-lintel in the Rājim temple, 3 miles from Sīrapura, represents a bust of Śiva flanked by Nāga figures, whose tails knot and intertwine and make a bold and very effective pattern.[3] In the temple at Kharod the stone door-frame of the sanctum is a well-executed piece of sculpture. The inner frame mouldings and jambs are richly carved in conventional ornaments in which *makara*, lotus medallions and rising scrolls are most conspicuous. At each side of the door-frame is a well-carved, life-size female figure, standing under an umbrella and attended by a diminutive maid, represensing the rivergoddesses.[4]"

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[1] *A.S.I., A.R.*, 1915-16, p. 12.

[2] Marshall, *A.S.I., A.R.*, XXIII, XXIV. *Guide to Sanchi*, p. 22.

[3] *A.S.I., A.R.*, 1909-10, p. 14, fig. 3.

[4] Cousens, "Ancient brick Temples in the Central Provinces", *A.S.I., A.R.*, 1909-10, p. 16, pl. IV (b).

40. EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD

(8th—9th Century)

On the break-up of the Gupta empire in the ninth century the current of its fine culture also received a setback. We enter upon the seventh century as the period of transition between the Gupta and the early medieval age. In this transitional period the older convention of art began to be replaced by newer conceptions which were characterised by a conscious force and an urge for vigorous expression. With the rise of the Rajput states in the different parts of the country in the eighth century many institutional developments of great value for the future evolution of society were witnessed. In the sphere of art the refined and restrained convensions of the Gupta period were replaced by colossal creation and cosmic conception. Art now fulfilled its purpose, firstly by gigantic execution of such monuments as the Kailāśa temple of Ellora ; secondly by the comprehensive narration of cosmic themses taken from the life-stories of gods and demons, and thirdly by interpreting the spiritual message of the age through a significant symbolism. We find that in the domain of philosophy, Saṅkarācharya proclaimed the unity of the individual soul and the universal soul, Ātman and Brahman. The old ideas about man and his powers circumscribed within the mortal coil of three and a half cubits were no longer sufficient to satisfy the inherent, human craving for greatness and expansion. All departments of human thought seem to have been affected. No longer satisfied with the tame, flat-roofed shrines of the Gupta period, new fashions in architecture concerned themselves with the developments of the *śikharas* and the *maṇḍapas*, and bold architects worked to convert entire mountain blocks into monolithic temples resembling Kailāśa and Meru. Both royalty and the people were moved by the same spirit. The Kailāśanātha temple of Ellora was the outcome of the grand conception of the Rāshṭrakūṭa emperors in the eight century. The ideal divine abode of Śiva on mount Kailāsa where he lives in eternal conjugal happiness with his consort Pārvatī and hosts of *devas*, was recreated on earth, as if it were, in the form of the Kailāsanātha shrine for the visual delectation of the pious and devout worshippers.

In the social and religious sphere the same spirit was manifested in the growth of such institutions as the *Saptasāgara-Mahādāna* (Gift of the Seven Oceans'), *Brahmāṇḍa-dāna* ('Gift of the Universe'), *Dharitrī-dāna* (Gift of the Earth'), etc., an index of the increased tempo of man's aspirations. In the realm of poetry the figures of speech (*alaṁkāras*) became subordinate to an uncommon fondness for *Atiśayokti* or hyperbolic description. Of course, this led to inevitable degeneration of the poetic art, as of all arts but there was no escape from a process which ultimately petered out in convensionalised descriptions and trivial details of the poetry of the later medieval period. The high sounding titles like *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*,

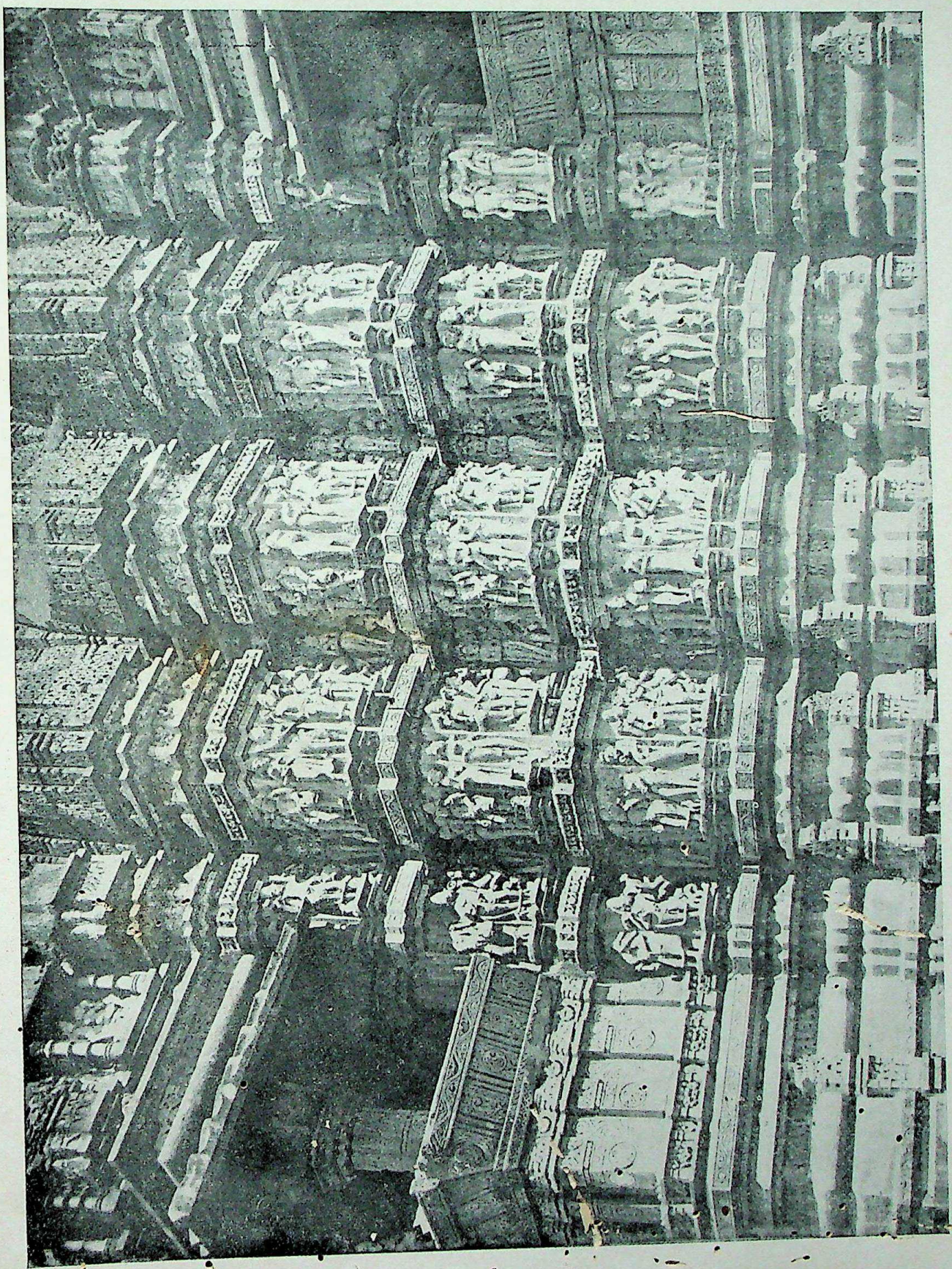
Parameśvara of many a potentate ruling the country from one end to the other and also the descriptions of the universe-enveloping dust stirred by their marching hordes give us some idea of the unbridled passion for big size and glory that was the rampant vogue of that age. The national soul bestriding the vast expanse of land and ocean from Madhyadeśa to Svarṇadvīpa and Śrīvijaya in Sumātrā on one side, and to the teeming Central Asian cities on the other, witnessed an unprecendented cultural empire unknown before or after in the history of Greater India.

The medieval period of our history falls into two divisions: Early Medieval (8th-9th cent.) and Late Medieval (10th-12th century). Four great imperial powers strived for supremacy in the first period, viz. the Gurjara-Pratihāras in the north (Kanauj), the Rāshṭrakūṭas in the Deccan (Mānyakheṭa), the Pallavas in the far sourth (Kānchī), and the Pālas in the east (Bihar—Bengal). The architectural monuments of the Gurjara-Pratihāras in north India have rolled into dust, leaving the whole Madhyadeśa a blank for old Brahmanical temples. The Rāshṭrakūṭas were more fortunate, having left the magnificent Kailāsa temple of Ellora, as an immortal monument to their glory. The Kailāsa temple of Dhārāpurī (Elephanta), although a little later, is in the same tradition, combining rich sculpture with bold architecture. The Kailāśanātha temple of Kānchīpurī in the south is a Pallava monument eloquent with the same spirit, but rather conventionalised. The sculptures and images of the Pāla school belong to the early medieval art, and at times show genuine grace and feeling.

The Paurānic stories of the lives of gods and goddesses play an important part in the sculptural representations of this period. The triumphant exploits of Śiva and Vishṇu symbolise the spirit of the times and give power to its art. The image of Śiva Naṭarāja performing his cosmic dance was conceived and created in this period and makes eloquent at one point the artistic urge of the times. Śiva vanquished the demon Gajāsura, controlled its riotous energy and discovered a new rhythm of life in the form of his Tāṇḍava dance. The images of Śiva-Tāṇḍava in the Lākhāmaṇḍal temple of Princess Īśvarā (eighth century) on the banks of the Yamunā in the remote interior of Dehradun district show the wide extension of this motif.

LATE MEDIEVAL PERIOD (*10th-12th century*)

Both sculpture and architecture entered on a new lease of creative activity and elaborate workmanship in this period. The great centres of art were Khajuraho in the north, Mount Abu and Pālitāna in the west, Tanjore in the south and Bhuvaneśvara and Koṇārka in the east. Under the patronage of the powerful Chandella kings and the Parmāra rulers of Malwa a large number of temples with rich sculpture were executed. The Khaṇḍāriyā Mahādeva and other temples of Khajuraho are noted monuments of this period. King Udayāditya and Bhoja of Malwa also caused several big temples to be built of which the Nīlakaṇṭha or Udayeśvara temple built by Udayāditya (1059-1080 A.D.) at Udaipur in Gwalior State represents the



Details of Sculpture. Kandariya Mahadeva Temple. Khajuraho.

best style of this period and is in fine preservation. The Jaina temples of Dilwara at Mount Abu are in marble, and the very elaborate carving of their pillars and reliefs shows how the sculptors handled hard stone like soft wax. In the Sun temple at Koṇārka and in the temples of Bhuvaneśvara the elaborate wealth of beautiful sculpture and decoration has reached extreme limits, testifying to a passionate love for exuberant detail as the universal feature of art in this period.

Several features may be noted about the subjects represented in this period. The iconography of the principal Pauranic gods and goddesses that had been evolved in the early medieval age entered into a new phase of elaboration, leading to an inconceivably complex pantheon, almost each deity revelling in a multiplicity of hands, attributes and variety of forms. An infinite number of goddesses, Mātṛikās, Yoginīs, Yakshiṇīs, Śāsana-devatās, etc. took the place of what used to be a vital religious art with significant religion. The iconographic forms were supported by a number of Dhyānas, Dhāraṇīs and Sādhanamālās. We also witness a conglomeration of numerous cults and faiths—Vaishṇava, Śaiva, Śākta, Jaina and Bauddha, which multiplied and freely met and mingled with one another. Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna, the cult of the Siddhas, and the Nātha Yogīs, of the Tāntrikas and the Śāktas, and many other imbecile forms of worship were serving as props for the religious beliefs of the people. There were many corrupt philosophies based on free sexual relationship, almost elevated to a religion. We witness its influence in several medieval temples portraying a series of 'posture figures', representing the eighty-four *Karaṇas* or *Ratabandhas*. This erotic basis of art and philosophy found its culmination in the later images representing the gods and their female counterparts in Yab-Yum ('Father-Mother') poses.

In the domain of philosophy the rational power of man became ineffective to conquer new regions of thought or master new systems. As a palliative, the human mind keeps brewing and boring at its own centre, entering into futile details of ratiocination like the beetle which bores through the wood at the point under its feet. As a result we find that the system of logic pursued in this period is reduced to a bundle of absurd niceties and new off-shoots of thought are nipped in the bud by the double-edged sword of hair-splitting *avachchhedaka* and *avachchhinna*. There was enough vanity, but little scope for original creation.

In the field of art also hardly any scope for individual initiative was left; all images became like dead imitations of each other. The artist instead of looking for new creative themes works according to stereotyped *dhyānas* of images, and indulges in cutting deeper and deeper into the outline of scroll-work until the chisel drills through to the other side of the stone, leaving behind a vacuum of *jālī* work from which its narrative contents had as if it were been squeezed out.

In the realm of architecture there is the same partiality for details. The varieties of *Prāsāda, Jagatī-Pīṭha* (basement) and *Śikharas* with their innumerable spires (*aṇḍas* or

or *śṛiṅgas*) are perplexing, and it is doubtful if the classification was not more theoretical than real.

The religious synthesis between Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva was expressed graphically in the form of the Trikūṭa shrines or triplecomposite temples both in the Chandella art of the north and the Hoysala art of the south. The plan of the temple combined three shrines in three directions leaving the fourth as the entrance; the three sanctums opened into a common *maṇḍapa*, and over the roof of each was built a *śikhara*. The art of this period still breathing of some force and a certain degree of freshness maybe compared to the last glow of a flickering lamp.

41. A NOTE ON SCULPTURES AT LAKHAMANDAL[1]

There are some important sculptures of Hindu gods and goddesses at Lakhamandal, a place of great antiquity on the Jumna in the Chakrata Tahsil of the Dehra Dun district. It is situated at a distance of 24 miles almost due east of Chakrata and can be covered on foot in two days. The sculptures are assembled at two places, firstly built into the side walls and also placed on the floor of the *antarāla* and of the sanctum of the Lākheśvara temple, and secondly collected in the closed shed built for the purpose by the Archaeological Department.

The present *antarāla* of the temple, which is a later addition to the Lākheśvara shrine, contains the following images :—

South Wall—In the first row is a Saptamātṛikā panel (length 4′—1½″×ht. 1′—0) depicting the Seven Divine Mothers, Brahmāṇī on full-blown lotus, Māheśvarī on bull, Vaishṇavī on Garuḍa who has a human face and two out-spread wings, Kaumārī on peacock, Vārāhī on a prostrate human figure, Indrāṇī holding Vajra and seated on elephant, and Chāmuṇḍā on a Preta. The lotus in place of *haṁsa* in the case of Brahmāṇī and the human figure as the *āsana* of Vārāhī are remarkable features.

In the second row is also a Saptamātṛikā relief (3′—4″×10½″) with Vīrabhadra on right and Gaṇapati on left, followed by two more sculptures, viz., one showing a standing male figure (ht. 1′—10½″×11½″) with a bull behind him, and the other a figure of six-armed Mahishāsuramardinī. The figure in the second image is two-armed with a bunch of flowers in the left and a club in the right hand (now multilated). He wears a *kirīṭa mukuṭa*, pearl ear-rings, *ekāvalī* pearl necklace, armlets and wristlets. The hair loosely fall in frizzles and a scarf is worn on the arms. A short *dhotī* is secured by a *mekhalā* knotted in front with a loop over a floral pattern from which depends an elegant chain going round like festoons, which shows the tassel ends falling on both knees. The figure is well-finished and gracefully posed ; it reveals the post-Gupta style and may be assigned to the early 8th century A.D.

In the third row are five smaller images including two Kārttikeya figures, one Saptamātṛikā relief and two Hara-Gaurī images. The first Kārttikeya image (1′—3″×10″) is of interest as besides the peacock vehicle in the centre are shown two more peacocks one at each end looking towards the god. The second four-armed figure of this deity has six heads arranged in a double row of three each, but is of a very late date. In the north wall of the *antarāla*, are small statuettes showing Hara-Gaurī, standing Vishṇu, a female goddess probably Durgā, Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa, and a big rounded stela showing Śiva-Pārvatī seated in āliṅgana-mudrā (ht. 3′—0×1′—10″). Amongst loose sculptures placed on the floor two are noteworthy, one representing Śiva-Pārvatī (ht. 3′—2″×2′—2″) seated on Kailāsa and the other showing squatt-

1 In collaboration with Pt. M. S. Vats.

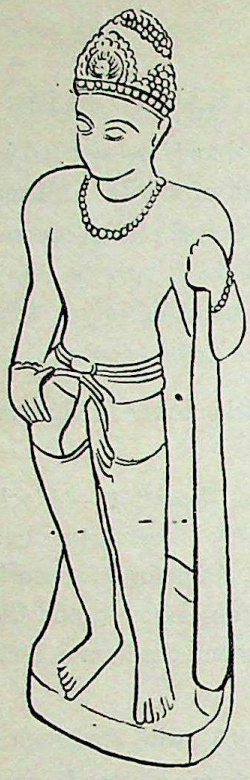


Fig. 154. Image of Dvārapāla. Lākhāmaṇḍal.

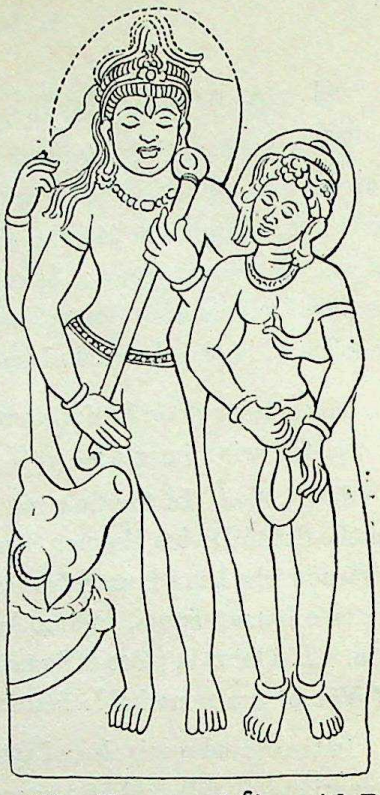


Fig. 155. Fourarmed Śiva with Pārvatī. Lākhāmaṇḍal.

Fig. 156. Śiva-Pārvatī seated on Kailāsa with Nandī. Lākhāmaṇḍal.

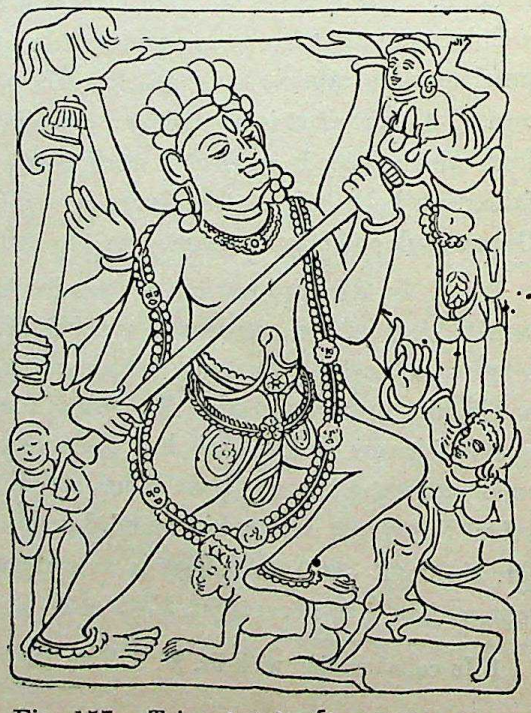


Fig. 157. Tripurāntaka Śiva. Lākhāmaṇḍal.

ing Kubera with three treasure vases. Both the images are of considerable artistic interest and maybe dated to the early medieval period. (Circa 8th century A.D.) Inside the sanctum of the Lākheśvra temple is a Śiva liṅga in worship. About two dozen sculptures of the late medieval period are placed along the walls comprising 5 images of Hara-Gaurī, 4 of standing Sūrya, 3 of Durgā, 1 of Pārvatī performing penance, 1 of Śiva as Lakulīśa, 1 of Nāga, 2 of Vishṇu and a few others. An image of Sūrya placed along the central wall is prominent (3′—0×2′—0). It shows the god holding lotuses in both hands wearing boots and attended by Aruṇa and the smaller figures of Daṇḍa and Piṅgala.

The wooden porch in front of the temple is remarkable for some good carvings of a symbolical nature and has two Nandī bulls (length 4′—3″ ; 3′—3″) placed in front which are made of the same fine black stone in which are carved the two Dvārapāla images of Jaya and Vijaya in front of the larger Liṅga shrine in the northern part of the compound. These Dvārapāla figures are two-armed, each holding a mace in his outer hand while the inner hand is placed on the thigh (*Fig. 154*). Each wears fine jewelled mukuṭa, ekāvalī pearl necklace with a central elongated bead, short *jaṅghikās* or loin-clothes secured by a girdle, their busts being extremely well-done both as regards finish and polish. On stylistic grounds these figures maybe assigned to the Gupta period (circa 5th century A.D.). The two Nandī bulls and the bigger Śiva liṅga (girth 6′—8½″, ht. above floor 2′), which was reinstalled at some later date in its present position in the northern part of the compound, probably belong to the early medieval period.

Of the three exterior niches (Sanskrit रथिका) of the Lākheśvara temple, the north one contains an image (रथिकाबिम्ब) of Mahishāsurmardinī in its original position ; the niche on the west is occupied by a small relief (ht. 1′—7″) showing two female figures, with two attendant parasol-bearers, the right one on lotus being Lakshmī and the left one on *makara* being Gaṅgā. The third niche on the south side is now empty.

The niches were surmounted by a *chaitya* window or *toraṇa* ornament containing an image of Kārttikeya on south, Gaṇapati on west and Kubera on north.

In the sculpture shed built by the Archaeological Department are collected about 70 sculptures. These have now been arranged and classified by Mr. M. S. Vats, Superintendent, Archaeological Survey, Northern Circle, Agra. Almost all the images appertain to the Śaiva pantheon and most of the beautiful architectural pieces belonged to the Śaiva temple built at Lakhamandal by the Princess Īśvarā whose inscription incised on a blackbasalt slab is preserved in this collection (*Ep. Indica*, Vol. I, pp. 11-15). The sculptures roughly belong to three different periods, viz., (1) circa 8th century, that is, of the time of the Princess Īśvarā; (2) late medieval period or circa 12th century and (3) post medieval period, i.e., about the 16th century or later.

Amongst images of the first period the following five are of much artistic value :

1. Image of Śiva-Pārvatī (ht. 3′—7″×1′—10″) showing four-armed Śiva standing with his consort Pārvatī against Nandī bull whose regardant head is turned towards the divine couple in rapt attention (*Fig. 155*). Śiva is playing on Vīṇā with his two upper hands, the remaining right hand is holding a trident (?) and the corresponding left hand touches the left breast of Pārvatī who is holding a garland in her hand near the thigh. Śiva has *jaṭājūṭa* on the head with some locks falling on right shoulder and is wearing a necklace, a pearl ear-ring in the right ear and a big discular ring in the left, armlets and wristlets, and lastly a beaded girdle with the *ūrdhva retas* feature marked on it. Pārvatī is also elegantly dressed, wearing a bodice and a *sārī*, a pearl ear-ring, an *ekāvalī* necklace, bracelets, a girdle and anklets round the feet. The sculpture, although somewhat weathered, shows much artistic quality being marked by deep harmony and an expression of inward joy. Circa 8th century A.D.

2. Bas-relief showing Śiva-Pārvatī (ht. 3′—0×2′—1″) seated on Kailāsa with Nandī bull, standing Gaṇeśa on right, Kārttikeya on left and a Śiva gaṇa in *añjalimudrā* in the centre (*Fig. 156*). Śiva holds a trident and a *mātuluṅga* fruit in his right hands, a snake in the lower left, while his upper left hand embraces Pārvatī at her breast. The divine couple is shown experiencing ecstatic pleasure in their abode on Kailāsa. Circa 8th century A.D.

3. Bas-relief (3′–2″×2′–4″) showing Śiva in his Tripurāntaka form. Śiva stands in *pratyālīḍha* posture and is piercing the demon Tripura poised in the sky with his trident held in two hands (*Fig. 157*). Two other hands hold aloft the canopy of elephant skin. Of the remaining right hands one holds the *paraśu* and the other is held in *abhaya mudrā*. Pārvatī is seated in a low seat in front of Śiva. The god is touching her at the chin in the act of reassuring her. She is holding her son Kārttikeya, standing by her side, as if to afford him protection from fear caused by commotion in this great drama.

Tripura seems to be depicted in his triple form, once being trampled under the left foot of Śiva, the middle one in the *antariksha* region is haggard and shown standing helplessly with a dagger in right hand, while the topmost form afloat in the sky is being pierced by Śiva's trident. Near the right foot of the god stands a *gaṇa* in the attitude of adoration, while the tall form of the deity majestically fills and dominates the whole scene. His matted locks stand erect on head and are secured at the lower edge by a fillet consisting of skull-bosses. He wears a long skull-garland (*kapālamālā*) and a *nāga-yajñopavīta*. (Circa, 8th century A.D.). There are two other reliefs showing Śiva killing the demon Tripura but they are not so well preserved.

4-5. Bas-reliefs (2′–2″×1′–10½″ ; 2′–7″×1′–7½″) showing god Śaṅkara in his *tāṇḍava* dance. The eight-armed figure of Śiva holds a canopy of elephant skin on the head with two hands ; of the remaining three right hands one plays the *ḍamaru*, another touches the chin of Pārvatī seated on his proper right and playing on a *vīṇā*, while the third one is shown in the

gaja-hasta pose. The corresponding left hands are held in *abhaya-mudrā*, grasping the trident and placed at the hip. An attendant gaṇa is seated at the left corner with a pair of upright drums in front. In the second bas-relief Pārvatī is seated in the lower left corner. The sculptures are expressive of movement combined with serenity. They maybe dated to about the 8th-9th century and are reminiscent of the best traditions of Ellora art.

There are five other images showing Śiva-Pārvatī seated side by side in the usual *ālingana* attitude. These may be assigned to about the 12th century A.D.

An image of Pārvatī (No. 14, ht. 2′–2″×1′–1″) showing the goddess in the act of performing penance is also worthy of attention. Pārvatī has a female attendant on either side, her right foot is placed on a lion and the left one on the back of the bull. The goddess is standing in the midst of four burning fire altars and holds a book in her left lower hand, the other attributes being lost. A Śiva-liṅga is carved in the right upper corner. Pārvatī wears simple dress and the image may be assigned to the same period as the foregoing sculpture of Śiva-tāṇḍava, i.e., about the 8-9th century A.D.

There is also a statuette of Durgā on lion and three images of the goddess Mahishāsuramardinī (Nos. 16-17-18), one of which with a rounded top (2′–5″×1′–5½″) may belong to about the 9th century A.D.

There is also a beautiful image of Kubera (No. 22 ; 1′–2″×1′–6″) squatting with three treasure vases arranged in a row in front of him and wearing curly hair and also having a scarf tied round his belly. Date circa 8th century A.D.

A couple of Gaṇapati images (Nos. 20, 21 ; ht. 1′–8″×1′–3½″) date from about the 12th century and a bas -relief (1′–0″×1′–2″) showing four-armed Vishṇu sleeping on Śesha dates from about the 16th century A.D.

A prominent lintel (No. 24 ; length 5′–4″, 1′–4″) showing the Saptamātṛikās with four-armed Vīrabhadra on bull at proper right and Gaṇapati on left is also note-worthy as Vīrabhadra, Māheśvarī and Chāmuṇḍā alone have four hands each, the others having only two hands. Circa 12th century A.D.

About half a dozen Śiva liṅgams of various sizes have also been collected in the museum shed. There are also about thirtysix architectural pieces, some of good merit, consisting of door-jambs and temple pediments carved with the chaitya-window enclosing the Trimūrti form of Śiva heads, this motif being a very common feature of Śaiva temples all over the hills of northern India. One sculpture (No. 37, length 8′–8″, height 2′-4″) consisting of three pieces is exceptionally good, the Trimūrti form shown in its circular sunk panel on the central piece being very dignified. On the side pieces adorned with beaded borders are carved *haṁsas* with conventionalised features. This as also a somewhat smaller pediment (No. 36) in one piece only (5′-6½″×2′-4″) maybe dated to about the 8th century A.D., and must

have formed part of the impressive facade of the monumental Śiva temple built under the patronage of Princess Īśvarā. Many other pieces of pediments showing either the Trimūrti heads or a single head are also preserved and reveal varying degrees of artistic merit.

An architectural piece carved in the form of a door-way (1′-1″×1′-7″) with central slit to accommodate a miniature shrine is carved on the jambs with two vertical bands, the inner one showing a foliated scroll and the outer one the Dvārapālas along the lower edges. Kārttikeya on proper right and Gaṇapati eating sweet balls on left are shown in the upper corners. Above the lintel is a Śiva head with three eyes. This piece possesses considerable merit and must date from the post-Gupta period.

INSCRIPTIONS

A. 1. Inscribed slab (2′—10½″×1′—9″) bearing 14 lines of writing known as the Lakhamandal Praśasti, recording the dedication of a Śiva temple by Īśvarā, wife of Chandragupta, prince of Jālandhara (*Ep. Ind.*, I, pp. 11—15).

A. 2. Inscribed slab (1′—10″×1′—5½″) bearing the epigraph in a sunken panel. The writing originally consisted of about 20 lines in Gupta script of which not more than one-fourth is now indifferently preserved. (Edited and published elsewhere in *JUPHS. XVII* (1)

A. 3. An irregular slab (1′—11½″×1′—6″) inscribed with several irregular lines of writing in Śaṅkhalipi of the Gupta Period.

A. 4. Left hand piece of a rectangular inscribed stone slab (ht. 9″×8″) containing traces of 5 lines of writing in Gupta script. Removed from the Lākheśvara temple to the museum shed.

A. 5. An irregular slab (2′—3″×1′—4½″) bearing a Devanāgarī inscription in six lines dated in Vikrama Saṁvat 1954.

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42. A SAMUDRAMANTHANA SCULPTURE FROM HARDWAR

This nice lintel (ht. 11″ ; length 2′6″ ; width 11″) originating from a village named Jhīvarhedī, 16 miles south of Hardwar, is now deposited in the Gurukul Kangari Museum at Hardwar. It is a welcome addition to a style of art, of which only few specimens are known in north Indian sculpture. The whole scene is very animated and the composition of the figures is rendered with great mastery and success. The force and dynamic application of power as appropriate to the occasion of the churning of the ocean are manifest in every detail of the sculpture, specially in the poses of the figures on the proper right side (*Fig. 158*).

The scene represented relates to Samudramanthana, churning of the ocean by the Devas and the Asuras. The cosmic serpent Vāsuki was used by them as the churning rope, Mount Mandarāchala was employed as the churning stick and its end rested on the back of the cosmic tortoise. The story says that the gods were relegated to hold the tail portion of the serpent as a mark of their receiving inferior treatment from the Asuras, who caught hold of the head of the serpent by virtue of their being of elderly rank. In the picture we find eight Deva figures holding the long body of the serpent and using their strength to pull it to their side. The figures have matted locks and beards. The bodies of the first two are shown slanting with the feet planted firmly on the ground and the busts exerting backwards. In between the first three figures there appear two more heads probably attendants or spectators. The third figure is wearing a *laṅgoṭī* and the serpent passes under his right arm. His serious-looking long drawn face is the work of a master, and the same can be said of the face of the fourth oldish figure posed in tension. This figure has a long beard and a top knot and is holding the serpent with both hands, the right elbow showing a sharp angle. The fifth figure is rather of younger age. The sixth figure is standing in an opposite way, with its back to the visitor, the serpent passing under his armpits. The next two figures are facing towards and standing nearest to the churning stick.

In the left corner of the relief, there is one figure which must be that of an Asura. He is holding the hood of the serpent, is wearing a conical *kulah* cap, and has a short beard and pointed cheek bones like those in Sassanian figures.

In between the first and the second figures on this side there is a longish object around which the body of the serpent is coiled twice. It is the churning stick in a jar (*ghaṭa*) placed on a mountain below which rests on the back of a tortoise.

The sculpture seems to be the work of a master. Its crowded but well ordered composition, the animated poses and rendering of the bodies in a realistic manner mark

it as a work of extra-ordinary merit and an outstanding specimen of north Indian sculpture. The concentrated exertion of force, the pressure of crowding figures and the tension of feeling are effectively rendered, permeating the entire scene. In the gigantic trial of strength between the Angels and the Titans, or the cosmic struggle for supremacy—the *Daivāsuram*—the Devas appear to have had to summon much greater reserve of power and the application of combined strength than the Asuras who seem to have taken it easy. As against eight Deva figures only one Asura is pitched and the expression on his face shows the easy assurance of victory. On stylistic grounds the sculpture maybe assigned to about the seventh century A.D.

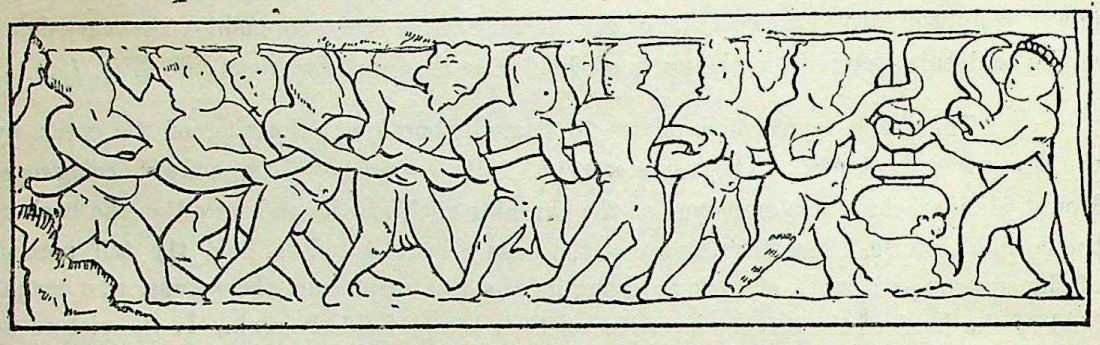

Fig. 158 Samudramathan sculpture from Hardwar.

43. THE KARDAMEŚVARA TEMPLE AT KANDWA, BANARAS

The small temple of Kardameśvara Śiva is a remarkable monument of medieval architecture being the only surviving specimen of the Gahaḍawala period. It is situated on the Pañchakrośī road or the circumambulation (Pradakshiṇā Patha) of the holy city of Banaras at a distance of two miles from the Hindu University towards its west. It marks the first stage on the Pañchakrośī yātrā.

Sited on the western bank of a rectangular tank lined with stone slabs and having ghaṭs on its sides, the temple stands on a raised stepped plinth with its doorway facing east. It is a triratha temple and has a small porch attached to it on the east. Each side consists of a middle projection the Rahapaga (रहपग=रथपद) flanked by two recessed sides, each consisting of two parts, viz. the Anurahapaga (अनुरथपद) and the Koṇakapaga (कोणकपद). The plinth (Pṛishṭha) consists of a double moulding. Above it is the vertical projection consisting of the Jaṅghā in two parts, the Talajaṅghā and the Uparijaṅghā separated by a projecting Kapotāvalī moulding. The lowermost course in the Talajaṅghā is adorned by decorative floral motifs in niches. The Talajaṅghā contains three sculptures on each of the three sides of the temple, one in the central niche (rathikā) of the Rahapaga, and one each in the Anurahapaga and Koṇakapaga. On each of the north and south walls there is one panel extra. The Uparijaṅghā contains only one image in a central niche on each of the three sides. Each face of the temple thus has four images, and the three sides have twelve images in all plus two additional ones on the north and south walls.

WESTERN SIDE

(1) Talajaṅghā, central niche. Four-armed Naṭarāja holding ḍamaru and Triśūla in right hands and a skull and ghaṇṭā in left. Below is Nandī and a gaṇa playing on drum.

(2) Talajaṅghā, proper right side : Four-armed Brahmā holding sruvā and akshamālā in right and Veda and Kamaṇḍalu in left. A haṁsa on the pedestal below.

(3) Talajaṅghā, proper left side. Four-armed Vishṇu holding gadā and padma in right and Chakra and Śaṅkha in left hands. There are four attendant figures round Vishṇu, and Garuḍa on the pedestal below.

(6) Uparijaṅghā. Four-armed Vishṇu holding attributes similar to the above figure.

SOUTH SIDE

(5) Talajaṅghā, central niche, six-armed Śiva seated in Padmāsana on a lotus with Nandī in front. Śiva is holding a triśūla and lakuṭa in right and a khaṭvāṅga and ghaṇṭā in left hand. The remaining two hands are held in front in the exposition-pose (Saṁdaṁśa mudrā), the fingers of the right hand hold an akshamālā.

(6) Talajaṅghā, proper right side. Umā-Maheśvarā seated in lalitāsana. Gaṇeśa in upper right and Kārttikeya in left corner. Nandī and lion shown below, and also two attendant figures.

(7) Talajaṅghā, proper left hand side: Umā-Maheśvara seated on Nandī. In the upper corners garland-bearing celestial figures, and in the centre a row of five liṅgas. Below: In the middle portion of the panel on the two sides are Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya.

(8) Uparijaṅghā: Umā-Maheśvara on Nandī.

(9) Talajaṅghā, central niche: Eight-armed Śiva as Vīra-bhadra standing with left leg forward in a pose called pratyālīḍha. He is holding a skull in left hand, other attributes being lost. A gajacharma is thrown over the head.

(10) Tālajaṅghā, proper right side on Anurahpaga: Four-armed Balarāma, holding hala and cup in right and musala in left hand, with a snakehood canopy above head; standing by his side is his wife Revatī. Balarāma is wearing an ekāvalī. Stylistically this seems to be an earlier image by about a couple of centuries (Gurjara-Pratihāra in style), which was incorporated later as a panel in this temple or copied from an earlier model.

(11) Talajaṅghā, proper right side on Koṇakapaga: Four-armed Ardhanārīśvara Śiva with triśūla in right and darpaṇa in left upper hand. The usual male and female features in the two halves of the body are indicated. This is an additional image on the north wall, the corresponding one on the south wall is completely defaced.

(12) Talajaṅghā, proper left side between Anurahapaga and Koṇakapaga: Four-armed Mahishāsuramardinī piercing the buffalo-demon, who is also shown in human form.

(13) Uparijaṅghā Rahapaga: Two-armed Vāmana, holding right hand in Varada-mudrā with a lotus in the palm, and the Śaṅkha in left hand. On right is the figure of king Bali and on left a female figure probably Pṛithivī, and another woman seated on ground with folded hands.

PORTICO

The portico is supported on eight pillars, arranged in two rows. The two pillars of the back row support the vestibule (antarāla) in front of the doorway. The figure on the door lintel (lalāṭa bimba) is damaged. In the proper right wall of the vestibule is an image of eight-armed Mahishāsuramardinī killing the buffalo-demon and on the left wall is a figure of dancing Gaṇapati, now worn. On the two jambs of the doorway are images of the river goddesses, Gaṅgā and Yamunā, whose vehicles are defaced. Each of the two groups consists of three figures: in the centre is the river goddess with a chhatra above head and a lotus in hand, on right of her is a male dvārapāla and on left a female attendant above whose head is a Nāgakanyā in añjalimudrā. Gaṅgā wears a crown on head with a horned Kīrttimukha ornament in centre and pearl festoons on the sides. She is wearing round the neck a torque and a necklace on breasts. Round the waist is a girdle with vertical pendants falling on each knee.

There are three Aṇḍa-Śikharas in each of the three diminishing horizontal tiers in which the Gaṇḍi or Śikhara is divided. The Śikhara is surmounted by an āmalaka, on which is a kalaśa and then an āyudha

44. A NOTE ON MEDIEVAL TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

Vāstu-Sāra[1] is the name of an interesting work on architecture written by Thakkura Pheru in 1315 A.D. in the reign of King Alauddin Khilji at Delhi, as stated by the author himself. It must have served as a practical handbook for architects of Jaina temples in the early Sultanate period. Its value for us lies insupplying architectural terms of precise significance applied to various parts of a temple building. Except for differences in the images installed in the sanctum of the religious edifices of the Hindus and the Jainas, the temple architecture of both was substantially identical, and more often than not the same artists and architects were being commissioned to build for the patrons of both religions. Thus the terminology used by Thakkura Pheru can be said to have been quite widely current, and as appears from a comparison with other texts, these words must have been the result of an uninterrupted evolution of architectural traditions as embodied in literature and illustrated in the existing monuments of the period. Some of those details can be recognised even in the temples of Un and Nemawar in Indore state published in this issue (i.e. *JUPHS.* Vol. *XVI*, Pt. I) and a knowledge of the original words designating the different parts, motifs and mouldings of a temple would make the study of such monuments more interesting. The following words are therefore recorded.

A temple is called *Prāsāda.* It has three principal divisions along its vertical line. The lower portion is the *Adhishṭhāna* (base), the central one the *Maṇḍovara* and the upper one the *Śikhara* surmounted by an *Āmalaka.* Vertical height is called *Udaya* or *Samutsedha*[2].

The entire basement or the Pīṭha was subdivided into two portions, the lower one directly rising from the ground level called the *Jagatī-Pīṭha* and the one above it *Prāsāda-Pīṭha.* These consisted of various mouldings and bands of decoration of which each had a separate name and a definite measurement allotted in proportion to the total height of the building. The simpler form of basement is said to consist of several preliminary courses with a variety of mouldings above them known as *Aḍḍathara, Pushpakaṇṭha, Jāḍya Mukha, Kaṇi* and *Kayavāli* (*Skt. Kapotāli*). Above is a course of lion faces called *Grāsapaṭṭī.* A Mahāpīṭha is more elaborate having in addition five more courses (*Thara* or *Stara*) named in order *Gajathara*

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1 A good edition of this text with Hindi translation has been published by Pt. Bhagwan Das Jain in the Jain-Vividh-Granthamala of Jaipur. For the time of the author, see p. 10 of this edition.

2 अधिष्ठान=जगती (प्रासादमण्डन २, १); five kinds—चतुरस्र, आयत, अष्टास्र, वृत्त and वृत्तायत (apsidal and elliptical).

(Elephant band), *Aśvathara* (Horse band), *Simhathara* (Lion band), *Narathara* (Band of human figures) and *Haṁsathara* (Geese band).

Next to the Jagatī rises the central portion of the temple which forms its main body. It is called *Maṇḍovara* or the main portion of the height of a temple equal to which the Maṇḍapa is made. The Maṇḍovara also has its mouldings and bands of decoration. Beginning from the lowermost the *Vāstu-Sāra* enumerates them as follows:

खुर, कुम्भ, कलश, केवाल (कपोतालि), मंची, जंघा, छज्जि, उरजंघा, भरणी, शिरावटी, छज्जा, वेराडु, पहारु।

The height of the Maṇḍovara is determined in relation to the length of the temple and is less than the length.

The Śikhara is the last element of height in a temple building dominating the whole structure and contributing more than any thing else to its grandeur and majesty.

Twenty-five kinds of temple buildings are enumerated with reference to the growing numbers of their subsidiary Śikharas called *Aṇḍakas*. The first of them, *Kesarī Prāsāda*, has one central Śikhara and four Aṇḍakas at the four corners and the last one *Meru* has 101 Aṇḍakas.

The eaves mark the last course of a Maṇḍovara. Above it rises Śikhara. At the level of the first course are found on three sides of the temple three images enclosed in niches (*Rathikāyukta Bimba*). Projecting above it are the *Uruśriṅga* projections and in the four corners are four small Aṇḍakas also called *Kūṭas*. Surmounting the Śikhara is the *Āmalasāra* and on it at the top is the *Kalaśa*.

The sanctum or adytum in the temple is called *Garbhagṛiha*, from which is derived the Hindi form *Gambhārā*. The cella marks the central lotus of the entire temple structure (*Prāsāda-Kamala*). There are three series of maṇḍapas or pavilions leading from the sanctum. The first is the *Gūḍha Maṇḍapa* or the *Antarāla Maṇḍapa* which serves as a vestibule. In the centre is the Middle Hall called *Raṅga-Maṇḍapa*, *Navaraṅga* or *Nṛitya-Maṇḍapa*. In three-celled structures of the triple shrines found in the Hoysala style in Mysore (*c.* 1047-1286), in the southern Chalukyan style and the north Indian Chandela style of architecture (as for example at Dudhai in Jhansi district in the Small Surang Temple), the central Middle Hall serves as the most conspicuous portion of the building. Its pillars support a high projecting cone as the roof with a pendentive and decorated all round with deep cusps. The entrance in front of the centre hall is connected by another covered space called the *Balāṇa-Maṇḍapa* or *Mukha Maṇḍapa*.

The doorway of the sanctum was another centre of attraction. In the early Gupta temple the doorway served as an elegant outer frame to give a proper setting to the image installed inside. This is particularly noticeable in case of the Gupta Vishṇu temple at

Devagarh. The same tradition was kept up right into the medieval architecture and some of our temple doorways are models of good carving combined with a wealth of symbolical details.

The lintel is called *Uttaraṅga* or *Śirapaṭṭī* (Apabhraṁśa *Siravaṭṭi*, Hindi *Serva*), the doorsil is *Udumbara* (देहली); the two side jambs are *Dvāraśākhā*. The image projecting from the lintel of the doorway is referred to as *dvāra-lalāṭa-bimba*. Each jamb is composed of several posts numbering three, five, seven or nine. There are attendant figures *Pratīhārīs* occupying the lower portion of the jambs nearer the entrance. This agrees with Varāhamihira who gives a more elaborate and clear picture of the door-jamb decoration:

अथ शाखा चतुर्भागे प्रतीहारी निवेशयेत् ॥ शेषं मंगल्यविहगैः श्रीवृक्ष-स्वस्तिकैर्घटैः ।
मिथुनैः पत्रवल्लीभिः प्रमथैश्चोपशोभयेत् ॥

Bṛihat. 56. 14-15.

One quarter of the door jamb height is occupied by human figures of Pratīhārīs.

The doorway decoration on the jambs consists of flying geese (*maṅgalya vihaga*), auspicious tree, Svastika and full vase (*Śrī-Vṛiksha-Svastika-Ghaṭa*), amorous couples (*Mithunas*), foliated scrolls (*patravallī*) and dwarfish figures (*pramathas*). These are illustrated on the Devagarh temple doorway and most of these features are continued in the medieval temples although in a conventionalised form. The festoon motif on the sil is called *Mandāraka* or *Santānaka*. The two lion heads on either side of the festoon are *Mukhas*. It is also laid down that in the eight corners of the temple in the Parikramā path there are figures of the eight Dikpālas carved in niches.

A prominent and very charming feature of medieval temples is the representation of dancing and acting female figures in different poses. A band of these figures was placed exteriorly on the walls of the Maṇḍovara at about its middle portion called *Jaṅghā*. They are aptly termed *Pikkhanaya* (*Prekshaṇikās*), i.e., acting female figures shown in beautiful dramatic poses.

Thakkura Pheru wrote also another book entitled the *Prāsāda-maṇḍana* which awaits publication. We have also the *Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra* of Bhojadeva (11th century) containing an exceptionally rich stock of architectural terminology and minute details of buildings together with their several parts as the Maṇḍapa, Jagatī, etc. The *Mānasollāsa* written by King Someśvara of the Western Chālukya dynasty of Kalyāṇī (*c. 1124-1138*) seems to preserve the officially accepted canons of architecture, sculpture and painting in the Chalukyan period. It is extremely important that these texts should be studied with reference to existing monuments and their technical terms explained and illustrated by actual examples found in them.

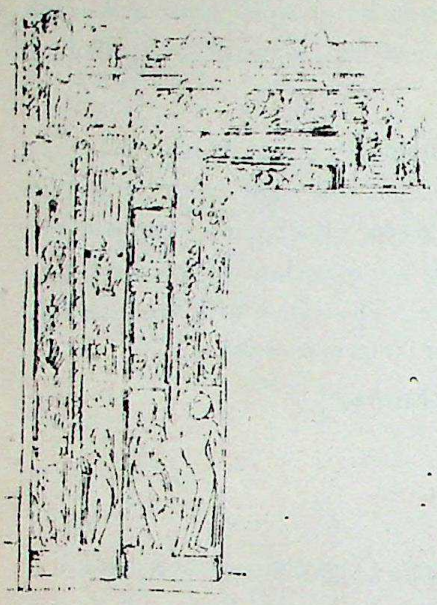


Fig. 159. Deogarh gateway showing *Pratīhārī*, *Patralatā*, *Mithuna* *Śrīvṛiksha* and *Pramatha*.

Fig. 160. Door-sil with *grāsa* (lion face) and festoon.

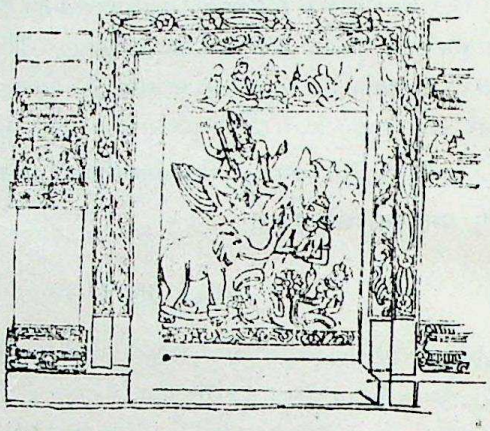


Fig. 161. *Rathikābimba* or exterior niche from a wall of Deogarh temple.

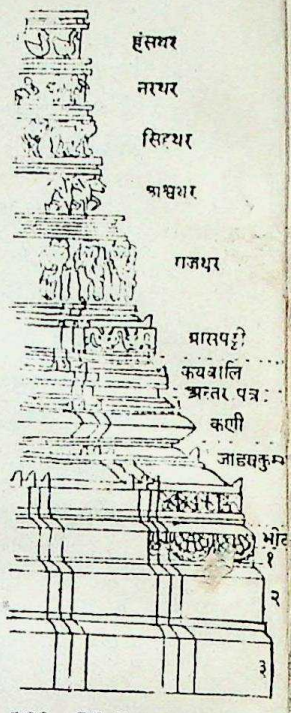


Fig. 162. *Mahāpīṭha* showi the Five Courses or *Pañchathara*.

Fig. 163. *Prekshaṇikā* or women in dramatic poses on the outside of medieval temple.

Fig. 164. Part of doorjamb showing Pratihārī and auspicious birds (*Mangalya vihaga*).

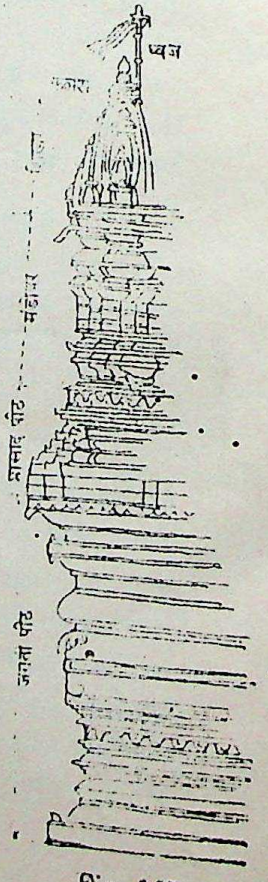


Fig. 165

EXPLANATION OF THE FIGURES

Fig. 159.—Proper right side of the gateway in the Gupta temple at Devagarh, illustrating (1) in the lintel the projecting image (ललाटबिम्ब) which became a regular feature of all later doorways; (2) on the jamb the standing attendant figures (प्रतिहारी), the foliated scroll पत्रवल्ली or पत्रलता the amorous couples मिथुन or दम्पती figures; the Prosperity Tree (श्रीवृक्ष) on the outer most band; the dwarfish figures (प्रमथाः) in the third band, which also occur in a great variety of poses on the Gupta architectural pieces from Nagod (now in the Allahabad Museum).

Fig. 160.—Door-sil showing two lion faces (ग्रासाः) and a festoon (संतान or मंदारक) between them.

Fig. 161.—Niche from a wall of the Devagarh temple, containing a profoundly moving religious scene, *viz.*, the गजेन्द्रमोक्ष, 'Deliverance of the Lord of Elephants.' The whole composition took the form of a sunk panel or false window framed in an architectural setting of pilasters and architraves and was repeated on all the three sides of the temple visible in the *pradakshiṇāpatha*. The composition came to be technically known as रथिकायुक्तबिम्ब and continued throughout the medieval period.

Fig. 162.—Mahāpitha consisting of a basement (जगती) below and the five horizontal courses (थर or स्तर) consisting of Elephants, Horses, Lions, Human Beings and Geese, named in order गजरथ, अश्वथर, सिंहथर, नरथर, हंसथर. Below are other mouldings named in descending order ग्रासपट्टी (lion-faces or Kīrtimukhas), कपोतावलि or pigeon-row course or the bird's beak (कपोतावलि), अन्तरपत्र (leaf moulding), कणी (torus), जाड्यकुम्भ (pot-form moulding) and three parallel plinth courses one above the other.

Fig. 163.—Dancing women in various dramatic poses called प्रेक्षणका or पेक्खनिका, and carved as a course in the Maṇḍovara portion of the vertical height of the temple.

Fig. 164.—Part of a doorjamb from Dah Parbatiya in Assam (Sivaramamurti, Sculpture inspired by Kālidāsa, Fig. 38). It clearly shows the auspicious flying birds referred to by Varāhamihira as मंगल्य विहग. The Pratihārī figure with a garland occupying the lower portion of the jamb is also clear.

Fig. 165.—Side view of a temple showing the जगतीपीठ (ground plinth), प्रासादपीठ (temple basement), मंडोवर (the central portion), the शिखर and the आमलक.

45. SOME ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ART TERMS

The following list of words compiled from various sources maybe found useful for preparing labels, guide-books and catalogues in Indian languages :--

Abacus	फलक, पलगै (तामिल)
Acanthus leaf design	मुर्रे की पत्ती, बलखाती हुई पत्ती, पलटे रुख पत्ता
Adytum	गर्भगृह, गम्भारा
Agate	गौरी या संग गावा
Aisle	प्रदक्षिणापथ, परिक्रमापथ
Alignment	बेल में होना
Alligator	मकर, ग्राह
Alligator-mouthed	मकरमुखी, गाहामुखी, नाकामुखी
Alto-relievo	उन्नत उकेरी, उभरी उकेरी
Ambulatory passage	प्रदक्षिणापथ
Amethyst	जमुनिया
Amulet	ताबीज़, बजरबट्टू, रक्षाकरंडक, रक्षावीटिका
Amulet string	रक्षासूत्र, ताबीज़ी गडा, रक्षावली
Amorous couples	दम्पती, मिथुन, जायापती
Anklets	झाँवर; नूपुर
Anthropomorphic	पुरुषविग्रह, नराकृति
Applique	जुड़वाँ, चिपटबाँ
Applying colours	रंगामेज़ी, रंजन
Arch	महराब, डाट
Architecture	वास्तु शास्त्र, वास्तु, स्थापत्य कला
Architrave	तोरण, बँडेरी
Area	चटाईदार ताप, रक़वा
Armlet	केयूर
Assembly hall	सभामंडप
Astragal	चड़ी, छल्ला
Atlantes	कीचक, गुह्यक
Background	पृष्ठभूमि, जमीन-आस्मान, भूमिका
Back-view	पृष्ठदर्शन, पीछे का रुख, परावृत्त
Balcony	झरोखा, गोख
Bamboo-stick design	फलछड़ी, चंपाछड़ी
Bangles	टड्डे, पाटवलय

Barrel roof (vaulted)	ढोला छत, ढोलाकार, गजपृष्ठ छत
Base	अधिष्ठान, पाद
Basement	आलम्बन, पीढी, अधिष्ठान, कुर्सी, पिंडिका, पिंडी, ठीहा, बैठकी.
Bas-relief	उत्कीर्ण शिलापट्ट, उकेरा हुआ पट्ट
Basso-relievo	अर्धचित्र, निम्न उकेरी, बैठी हुई उकेरी
Battlement	कंगूरा
Bay	चौकी, गुमटी
Beads	बीज, गुरिया, मनके, दाने, पोत
Beaded necklace	गुरियादार कंठा
Beaded moulding	हीर की सज
Bead and reel design	गुरिया-ढोलने की सज
Beam	धरन, पाटा
Belly (of a pot)	पिटार, घूमपिटार
Belt-clasp	पक्खा
Birth of the Buddha	बुद्धजन्म, जाति
Blackening	कजरियाना
Black lines	काली धारियाँ, स्याह रेखोपरेखा
Bodice	चोली
Bodily frame	काठी
Bondstone	दाब का पत्थर
Bolts	हुड़के, कीलें
Border lines	खतकशी, पर्यन्तरेखा
Bottom	तला, पेंदी
Bracket	टोड़ी, मन्दल, घुड़िया
Bracket female figure	तोरण-शालभंजिका
Brickbats	इंटोरे
Burnisher	घोटा, मोहरा
Bust	बदामा, ऊर्ध्वकाय मूर्ति
Calyx	पद्मकर्णिका, बताशा
Camber	गरदना
Capital of pillar	भरना, बतूरा, कुंग, पद्म, स्तम्भ शिर्ष
Carved in the round	कोर कर बनाई हुई, कोर का काम
Carving	उकेरना, गढ़ना, उकेरी, कटाव, नक्शोनिगार, मुनब्बतकारी, खुदाई, बेलबूटों की तराश, फूलपत्ती का काम
Cartouche	हौदा, तावीज, तविज्रिया

Cast	ढार
Cat's eye	लहसुनिया
Cemetery	श्मशान, पितृवन, तकिया
Centre	म्याना, मध्यबिन्दु, केन्द्र
Centring	म्याना करना
Cella	गर्भगृह
Cire perdue process	मधूच्छिष्ट विधि
Chaitya window	चैत्य वातायन, चैत्य गवाक्ष
Chamfer	पख मारना, गोल छांटना, सिल्ली देना
Chevron	सिंघाड़ा
Chiarascuro (light and shade effects)	साया-अँजोरा, धूपछाँह, नतोन्नत, ऊँचा-नीचा, सित स्याह-ऊजर, श्यामोज्वल, अँधेरा-उजियाला, उ तन-पज्जोतन
Circumambulation	परिक्रमा, प्रदक्षिणा
Citadel	कोटला
Calmps	आँकुड़े, पाँव, खीले
Cloister	दालान
Closed hall	गूढ मंडप
Coin cabinet	मुद्रासंग्रह, सिक्का-खाना
Coating	अस्तर
Column	स्तम्भ, खंभ, टेकन, लाट, मलखम
Composition	संपुंजन
Commemorative stūpa	उद्देशिक स्तूप
Concave	नतोदर, गलता, ऐंड, कमानीदार गोलाई
Conspicuous truban	पग्गड़, भारी उष्णीश
Conventional	ढर्रेदार
Convex	उन्नतोदर, माहीपुश्त
Coping	मुंडेरी, उष्णीश
Coral	मूंगा, प्रवाल
Corner shrine	खूंटरा देवल
Correct outline	सच्ची टिपाई
Costume	वेष भूषा, नेपथ्य, लिबास
Couchant lion	दबका नाहर, भंईचप्पी सिंह
Counterpart	जवावी
Courtyard	सहन-आँगन
Coverlet (for horses and elephants)	पलान, प्रवेणी, कुथ, उत्तरच्छद

Crescent and globule	चन्द्रदिवाकर
Crescent	चन्द्राकार, चन्द्रकला
Crest-jewel	चूड़ामणि
Crocodile mouthed conduits	मकरमुख प्रणाली
Crease	चुन्नट, वस्त्रभंग, ऊर्मियाँ
Creeper	लतर, बेल
Cross-section	चीर का नक्शा, छेवा
Cuneiform writing	कीलाक्षर, किलकलिपि, खते-मीखी
Curvilinear tower temple (Orissan)	रेखा देवल
Cusp	प्याला
Cusped	प्यालेदार
Cyma	गोला-गलता
Dabber	थपुआ, स्थपुट (सं०), पिड़ी
Dancing hall	नृत्यमंडप, नटमन्दिर
Dazzling colours	चुहचुहाते रंग
Debris	मलबा
Decorator and pager	वसलीगर
Decoration	सर्ज, सजावट, अलंकृति
Dentils	दन्ती
Design	विधान, अभिप्राय, तरह
Diamond	हीरा, वज्र
Dividing into compartments	खंड बांटना
Dusting	खाका झाड़ना
Display	प्रदर्शन
Dome	गुंबज
Doorjamb	द्वारशाखा, साही, उपान्त स्तम्भ, पार्श्व खंभ, अद्दपे, खड़े पत्ते, तमंचे, बाजू, दो बांट (double), तीन बांट (triple), त्रिशाख-तिसाही-सीदरा
Doorsil	देहल, देहली
Doorway	पौरी, द्वार
Double jamb	दोफर्दा बाजू, दोहरा या दो बांट खंभ
Drapery	वेषभूषा, नेपथ्य, लिबास
Dwarf	बाना, वामनक, [illegible]
Dwarf pillar	अंघ्रि स्तम्भ
Earring	कुंडल, बाली, बाली पत्ता
Eaves	छज्जा

Edge	कोर, पक्खा, कगर
Elephant pair	गजसंघाट
Elephant, trumpeting	चिंघाड़ता हाथी, नदन्त हस्ती
Elevate	उठाना, खड़ा करना, हुमासना
Elevation	खड़ा नक्शा, उत्सेधविन्यास, सामने का रुख
Embankment	घाट, बंधा, बाँध
Emerald	पन्ना, मरकत
Embrasure	इन्द्रकोष विवर
Enamel	मीना गरी, मीने का काम
Enclosure	बाड़ा, अटहरा, चारदीवारी
Engraving	खुदाई, नक्काशी
Enlightenment	अभिसंबोधि, बोधि
Exfoliation	चिट उखड़ना या उतरना, पपड़ियाना
Expanded metal	वर्फीदार जाली, लौजाती जाली
Facade	मुहार
Facial expression	चेहरामुहरा
Facing of stone slabs	संगबस्ता रुकार
Ferrule	चूड़ी, छल्ला, कड़ा
Festoon	गुच्छा, जाल, संतानक
Filling interspaces	अँतरी भरना
Final outline	खुलाई, उन्मीलन, तहरीर
Finial	स्तूपी
Fish-tailed elephants	जलहस्ती, जलेभ, करिमकर
Flaking	पपड़ियाना
Flower band	फूलछड़ी
Flower basket	फूल चंगेरी, पुष्पकरंडक
Fluted	खारेदार, चीमरी की भाँति
Flutings	खारे, खंभे की डंडी पर कोरदार उभरवाँ सींकें या ध
Flutings, to make	खंभे की ढाल पर सींक रखना
Fold of dhoti	पटली
Foliage decoration	वेलबूटों की संज, फूलपत्ती का काम
Foundation	नींव, बुनियाद, जड़
Free-standing gateway	वहिर्द्वार तोरण, मुखतोरण
Fresh from mint	चिल्की सिक्का
Fret	जाली
Frieze	तख्ता, अर्ज, आंचल पल्ला

Front elevation	खड़ा नक्शा, रुकाड का नक्शा, उत्सेध विन्यास
Front hall	मुखमंडप
Front view	समुख दर्शन, सन्मुखी, ऋजुस्थान, समभंगी आसन
Full vase	पूर्णघट, पूर्णकलश, चंदनकलश, मंगलघट
Gallery	बीथी, संग्रहकक्ष
Garnet	तामड़ा
Gems	नगीने
Gem-inlay	नगीने का काम
Girdle	करधनी, कांची, मेखला, तगड़ी
Gravel	बजरी
Granulated	रवालेदार, कनूकेदार
Great Decease	परिनिर्वाण
Groove	झीरी, नाली
Grooved rim	गरारीदार किनारा
Grotesque mask	ग्रासमुख
Grotesque mask course	ग्रासमुख पट्टी
Ground plan	पड़ा नक्शा, पाद-विन्यास
Gypsum	गच पत्थर
Half front view	अर्ध ऋजु दर्शन
Half medallion	परिचक्र, टिकिया
Hall	शाला, मंडप
Halo	प्रभामंडल, प्रभावली, छाया मंडल
Hatched design	ककोरे-की तरह, करेली, जाल-चपेटा
Head	मस्तक, सिर
Hexagonal	छह पहलू
High light	चिलिक
Hood	फन, घटाटोप
Horse moulding	अश्व थर, अश्वपट्टी
Horse pair	हय संघाट
Horse-shoe arch	घुड़नाल डाट
Hymaritic writing	खते अमरी, अमरी लिपि
Incense burner	धूपदानी
Inlay	पच्चीकारी जड़त
Inlay work	पच्चीकारी का काम, जड़त का काम
Interspace	अंतरी
Inthyphallic	अँडुआ, कूष्माण्ड लिंगधर

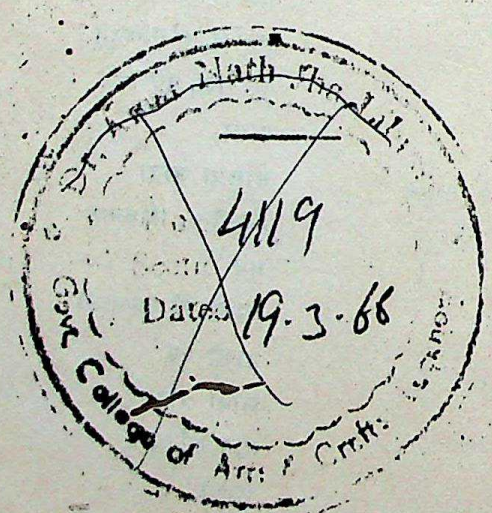
Kiosk	छतरी
Laminated	परतदार
Lapidarist	बेगड़ी, वैकटिक (सं०), रत्न तराश
Lapis lazuli	लाजवर्दी, राजावर्त
Lattice work	पिंजर
Leogryph	ब्याली, याली
Life-size	आदमकद, कायपरिमाण
Lintel	सिरदल, उतरंगा, सुहावटी, पैडी, उदुम्बर, पाटा
Lion-mouthed	नाहरमुखी
Locks	लट
Lotus leaves	लोलोफर पत्ती, मौजपत्ता, पद्मपत्र, कमल पत्ता
Lotus moulding	पद्म
Lozenge	शकरपारा, लौज़ाती, फर्रीदार
Lug handle	मुठिया, चुंदी
Margin	हाशिया, किनारा
Meander	पालकीदार लतर, गोमूत्रिका, बाँवाजेली
Medallion	टिकिया, फुल्ला, परिचक्र
Mellowing of colours	रंग बसना
Merlons	कंगूरे, कपिशीर्षक
Mixed colours	मिलवां रंग, संकर वर्ण
Modelling	पोल, उभार, बनावट
Modelling, to show	पोल दिखाना
Modeller	कुम्हार, लेपकार, पुस्तकर्मी
Monastery	संघाराम
Moonstone	चन्द्रशिला
Mortise and tenon	गूहाधान, गुहा-गहन, मानीकीला, ऊलचूल
Moulded work	लेप्यचित्र, पुस्तकर्म
Moulding	गोला
Mouldings, to make	चूड़ी-छल्ले निकालना
Mound	टीला, ढूह, थूहा, तूदा, धुस्स
Neck moulding	पद्म बन्ध
Niche	ताक, आला, रथिका, आलय
Northern dress	उदीच्यवेष
Notched impression	खँदेल
Onyx	संग सुलेमानी (सफेद धारीदार स्याह रंग का पत्थर), जुन्नारी, गोमेद, कमरी

Open mouthed	करालमुखी
Oranmental mask	कीर्तिमुख
Outer gate	बहिर्द्वार
Outline	रेखा कर्म, टिपाई, स्याहकलम, रेखांकन, आकारमातृका, आकार-जनिका रेखा
Oval	बैज़ाबी, बैज़हा, अंडाकार
Painted canvas	चित्रपट
Painted pottery	लिखे हुए बर्तन
Painting	चित्रकर्म, लिखाइ, लिखना, उरेहना
Painting pearls and lac dye	मोती-महावर का काम
Palace	महल
Palmette	पद्महस्तक, पउमहत्थग, हत्था, थापा
Panel	दिलहा, तखती
Panelled	दिलहेदार
Papier mache	कुट्टी का काम
Parallelogram design	कनकव्वे की बेल
Parasol	छत्र
Parasol, triple	त्रिछत्र
Pavilion	बारादरी, मंडप, चंदोवा, वितान
Pearl festoon	मुक्ताजाल, मुक्तादाम, मोती गजरे
Pear-shape	कैरी नुमा
Pedestal	चौकी, बैठकी, ठीहा, पिढिया
Pellet	गोली
Pellet and reel border	गुरिया-गरारी की छड़
Pendant (ear)	झुमके
Pendant bells	घंटालियां, किंकणीजाल
Perspective	दूरी दिखाना
Petals	मौजपत्ते, पंखुड़ियां
Petticoat	जांघिया, चनिया, चलनिका (सं०)
Picture album	चित्रावली, मुरक्का
Picture gallery	चित्रशाला, चित्रागार, चित्रसद्म चित्रालय, चित्रगृह
Pilaster	बगली सतून, सतून का अद्धा, पक्के का आधा थमला पखवाई सतून या थंभ,
Pillar	स्तंभ, थंभ, खंभा, सतून, स्थूणा, टेकन
Pillar capital	स्तम्भ शीर्षक, भरना, धतूरा, कुम
Pinnacle	बुर्जी, गुलदस्ता

Pitting	टकोरन।
Pitted surface	टकोरी जमीन
Plan	नक्शा, पड़ा नक्शा
Plaque	टिकरा, टिकड़ी
Plaster of Paris	चूनम, संगजराहत, सेलखरीकी गच
Platform	स्थंडिल, मंच, वेदिका
Plinth	कुर्सी, पीठ
Portico	बरसाती
Portrait	प्रतिकृति, शबीह, प्रतिच्छन्दक
Potsherds	ठीकरे, खपरे
Preaching	धर्मचक्र प्रवर्तन, व्याख्यान
Preparing the ground	जमीन बांधना
Processional passage	प्रदक्षिणा पथ
Profile	एक चश्मी
Proportion	कैडा
Promenade	चंक्रम
Pulpit	मिम्बर
Punch-marked coin	आहत मुद्रा
Punched marks	ख़प, अँकान
Pinched nose	चिकुटवां नाक
Pulley	घिरनी, ढुप्पी, चरखी
Pulley block	चालढुप्पी, दरनी
Railed parapet	जाली
Railing	वेदिका, चारदीवारी
Railing pillar	थंभ, थब, वेदिका स्तंभ
Rampant	उछलता हुआ, कूदता हुआ
Rampant lion	शार्दूल
Rampart	प्राकार, प्राचीर
Recessed	धसकेदार, धसका देकर बना हुआ
Rectangular	चौपहल आयत
Red sandstone	लाल पत्थर, बाली पत्थर
Reel and Bead border	गरारी-गुरिया की बेल
Relic	धातु
Relic chamber	धातुगर्भ
Relic casket	धातु करण्डक, धातुमंजूषा
Relic stūpa	धर्मराजिका

Relief	उभरवाँ उकेरी
Relief image	उभारदार मूर्ति
Repousse	ठप्पे का काम
Reliquary	धातुमंजूषा
Rim	कोर, किनारा, धार
Ring	कंकण
Ringstones	चकिया, मुंदरी, चकरैया, गंडकुसूल
Ringstone wells	मुंदरी के कुएं, गाँड
Riveting	ठरना, जड़ना
Rosette	फुल्ला, चंदक (fixed to a doorleaf), चक्कर-गुल, टप्पा
Safe	तिजोरी
Sacred bell	वीरघंटा
Sanctuary cell	गंभारा
Sanctum	गर्भगृह, गम्भारा
Scalloped	बंगड़ीदार, हस्तिनख
Scroll	पत्त की मुनव्वत का काम, पत्रलता, पत्रभंगरचना, जंगला
Sculptor	संगतराश, शिलवट, शैलरूपक
Seat	आसन
Sea-elephant	जलेभ, जलवस्ती, करिमकर
Semi-circle	अद्धा, अधमोल्ला
Sepals	बछेड़ी
Shade-light	सामा-अंजोरा, नीचा-ऊँचा दिखाना, निम्नोन्नत, उत्तोन्नत
Shading	बर्तना, परदाज
Shading minute	धूँआधार परदाज
Shoulder	पिटार, गला
Shaft, middle portion of the pillar	डंडी, दरमियानी धड़, [illegible] का हिस्सा
Sides	[illegible], पहलू, बगली
Side elevation [illegible]	बगल का [illegible]
Silhouette	छाया
Shading with crossed lines	जालीदार परदाज, हैरिक (from the [illegible] shape of the diamond)
Shading in which lines melt into one another	गड़ाज परदाज
Shading in which every hair is shown separately	एक बाल परदाज

Shading with close indistinguishable lines	घूहा परदाज़
Stippling	वर्तना, परदाज़,
Stippling with minute parallel lines	पत परदाज़ पत्रवर्तना
Stippling with dots	दाना परदाज़, बिंदुवर्तना
Sketching	बुतबांधना, आकारमातृका लेखन, आकार देखाना
Skirts	दामन, लहँगा
Slab	फ़र्द, सिल
Slip	काबिस, कपिशामिट्टी, दुआरा
Small decorative turret	गुलदस्ता
Small fort	कोटला
Spout	टोंटी
Stūpa, commemorative	उद्देशिक
Stūpa on relics	शारीरिक
Stūpa erected over articles	पारिभोगिक
Terraced platform	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

Story	तल, मंजिल, भूमिक
Straight	समभंग, अभंग
Strut	घुड़िया
Stucco	गच, चूनम
Stucco heads	गचकारी के मस्तक
Stūpa on relics	शारीरिक स्तूप
Stūpa facing or covering	आच्छाद्य
Subsidiary shrine	खूंटरा मंदिर
Sunlight	अँजोरा
Symbol	लक्षण, रूप
Symmetrical	सुडौल
Tapering	सलामीदार, गावदुम
Terracotta	(*a*) मिट्टी का खिलौना
	(*b*) पार्थिव
Terrace	मेधि
Theriomorphic	पशुविग्रह
Thousand pillard	हजार सतून, सहस्रथंब, सहस्रस्तम्भ
Three celled temple	त्रिकूटाचल मंदिर (Chalukyan)
Tie and dye	बाँधनू की रँगाई
Tile	चौका
Tip of the nose	नासाग्र
Tomb Chamber	हुजारा, समाधिगृह
Topaz	पुखराज, पुष्पराज
Torus (semi circular)	गोला
To sweep or incline to one side	बेलिया जाना
Toy	खिलौना, क्रीडनक
Torso	धड़
Tracery	जाली की नक्काशी
Transparent colour	ढाकी रंग
Transparent orhni	झीना ओढ़ना
Trefoil	तीन काँटेदार
Trelliswork, tracery	जाली
Trifoil arch	रीबंगडी बस्ता
Tumulus	चैत्य (From चिता)
Tunic	कंचुक
Turquoise	फ़ीरोज़ा

Tracing paper	चर्बी (gold beater's skin)
Tympanum	कर्छीदार डाट.
Type	भाँति
Unhewn block	खड़
Variety	बाना
Vase	मिटकी, पूर्णघट, चंदनघट
Vase & foliage	घटपल्लव
Vault	गुंबज, गुंबद
Vestibule	सुखनासी, अन्तराल मंडप
Waistband	पट्टिकाडोर, कमरबंद, कटिवस्त्र, कटि काछनी
Wall in the form of false railing	भित्तिवेदिका
Wavy line	लहरिया
Webbed fingers	जालांगुलि
Weeping willow tree	छोंकर
Wheel of life	भवचक्र
Winged harpy	सुपर्ण
Winged lion	सपक्ष सिंह, पक्षगर्मसिंह
Worshipful columns	आर्यकस्तम्भ
Wrapper	उपरना, उत्तरीय, परेला
Wristlet	पहुँची